

CHANDAMAMA

MAGAZINE FOR THE YOUNG



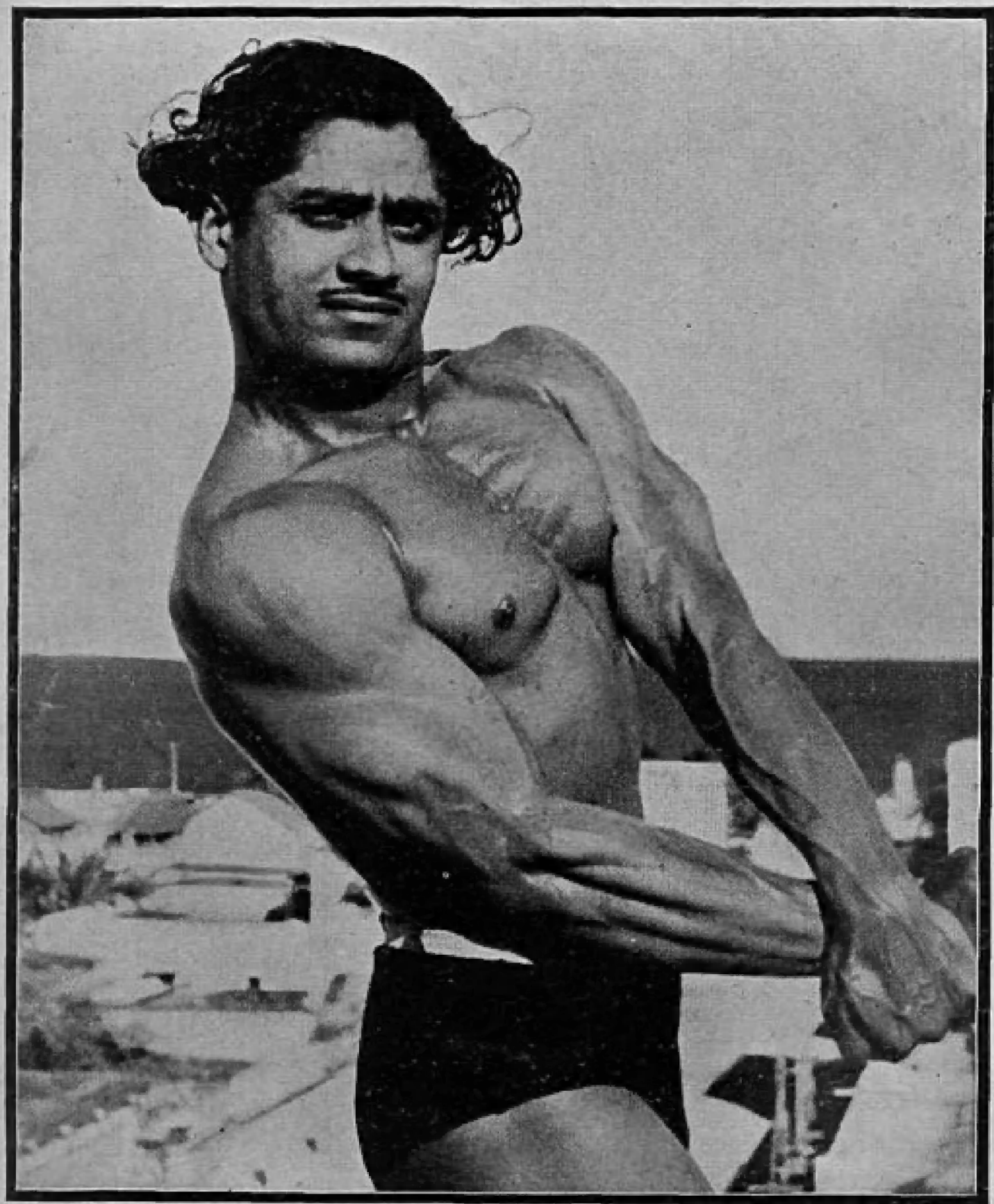
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CHANDAMAMA

MAY '57

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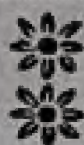


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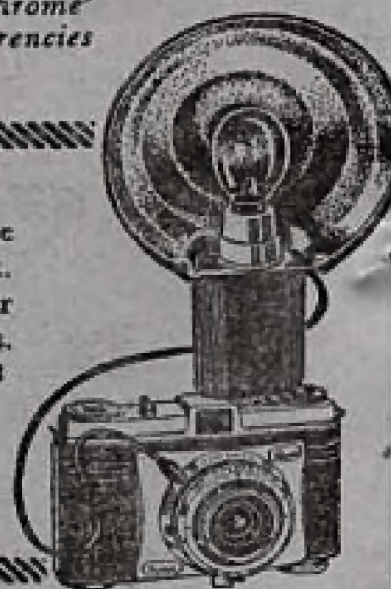
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AND
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A hundred years ago this month there occurred in our country a revolt that was the forerunner of the struggle for Independence of the Indian peoples. Though it was referred to as Sepoy Mutiny, it was more than a mutiny of soldiers, it was an attempt to drive the British out of India through violence. Faced with more ruthless violence the attempt failed.

More than half a century later Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of our Nation, revived the struggle on the basis of Non-violence. Satyagraha was the technique. This novel kind of struggle was not only unique in human history, but also it served to unify the entire country and its peoples. Internal feuds and divisions had made India an easy prey to the imperialists, but the non-violent struggle brought about the reverse condition. Once the country was united the stage was set for complete independence, which we finally achieved. This year we celebrate the Centenary of the 1857 struggle for Independence.

VOL. 4

MAY 1957

NO. 5

THE FRONT COVER

THE Pandavas completed twelve years of forest-life. Now they had to spend a year strictly incognito. Yudhisthira conferred with his brothers and decided that they should spend the year with King Virata of Matsya.

"I shall call myself a Brahman, Kanka by name," Yudhisthira announced. "And I shall entertain the King with my art in dice-play."

"I shall call myself Valala," Bhima said, "and engage myself as Virata's cook. My great strength will be at his disposal whenever the occasion demands it."

"I shall play the part of a eunuch," Arjuna said, "Brihannala shall be my name. I shall dress myself like a woman and teach dancing to the royal maidens and entertain the royal family with my dancing and singing."

Similarly, Nakula wanted to become the master of the King's stables under the name of Dama-grandhi, while Sahadeva wanted to tend the King's flocks, calling himself Thanthri-pala.

"I shall live the life of a Sairandhri—a free woman—and serve Queen Sudheshna as her handmaid, since I am an expert in the art of decorating," Droupadi said.

Having decided upon their future thus, the Pandavas bade farewell to Dhoumya and the other Brahmans who had kept them company, and made for the city of King Virata. In a burial-ground outside the city they changed their appearances to suit their new vocations. They tied up their arms in a bundle, hid the bundle in the branches of a Sami tree and covered it with a repulsive corpse.

Then they entered the city of King Virata.





THE GIFT

ONE time, Bodhisatva was born King of Banaras. During his rule, there was a rebellion on the border. To put down the rebellion the King went to the border with an army.

There was a fight. In the fight the King was wounded and his horse ran away from the battlefield.

Later the King found himself in the centre of a village. Here the thirty householders of the village were discussing village affairs.

On seeing the horse and the King dressed for battle, and his wound, all the villagers except one ran away. The one villager who did not run away approach-

ed the King and said, "Are you a rebel or a royalist?"

"I am for the King, sir," said the King.

The villager was satisfied with the answer. "Come with me," he said.

He led the King to his house, asked his wife to wash his feet, feed him and attend to his needs. He himself looked after the King's horse, fed him and watered him.

The King stayed as the villager's guest for four days and got well.

Then he decided to go back to Banaras.

He thanked the villager and took leave of him, saying, "Sir,

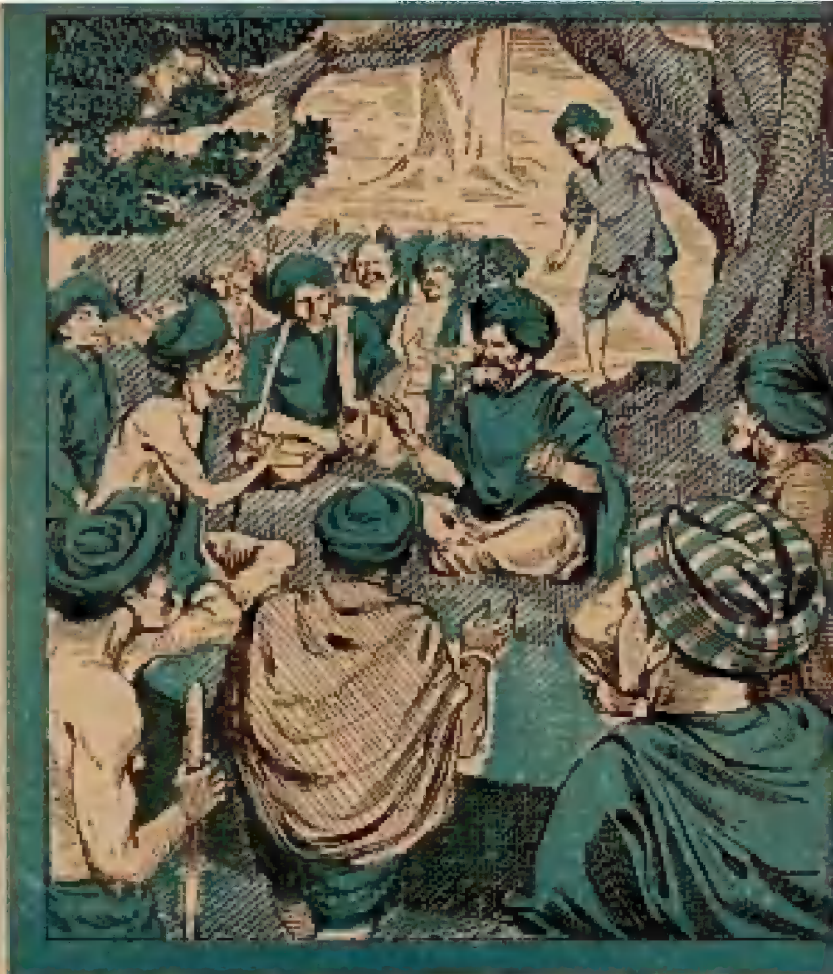
I live in the fort area of Banaras. I have a wife and two children. If you come to the gate on the right and ask the watchman to show you the house of the Great Horseman, he will bring you to my house and you can be my guest as long as you like."

Then the King went and joined his forces.

The rebellion was quelled in the meantime and the King returned to Banaras. He secretly called for the porter of the right gate and said to him, "If anyone should come from the frontier and ask you to show him the house of the Great Horseman, bring him straight to me in the palace."

The King waited for the coming of the villager a long while, but the villager did not come.

In order to make him come, the King told his Ministers to



raise the tax on that particular village.

Still the villager did not come.

The King raised the tax on the village again and yet again.

Then the villagers said to the man, "you have a friend in Banaras. Why don't you go to him and ask him to reduce the tax? The tax burden is killing us!"

"I'll go," said the villager, "but not with empty hands. He

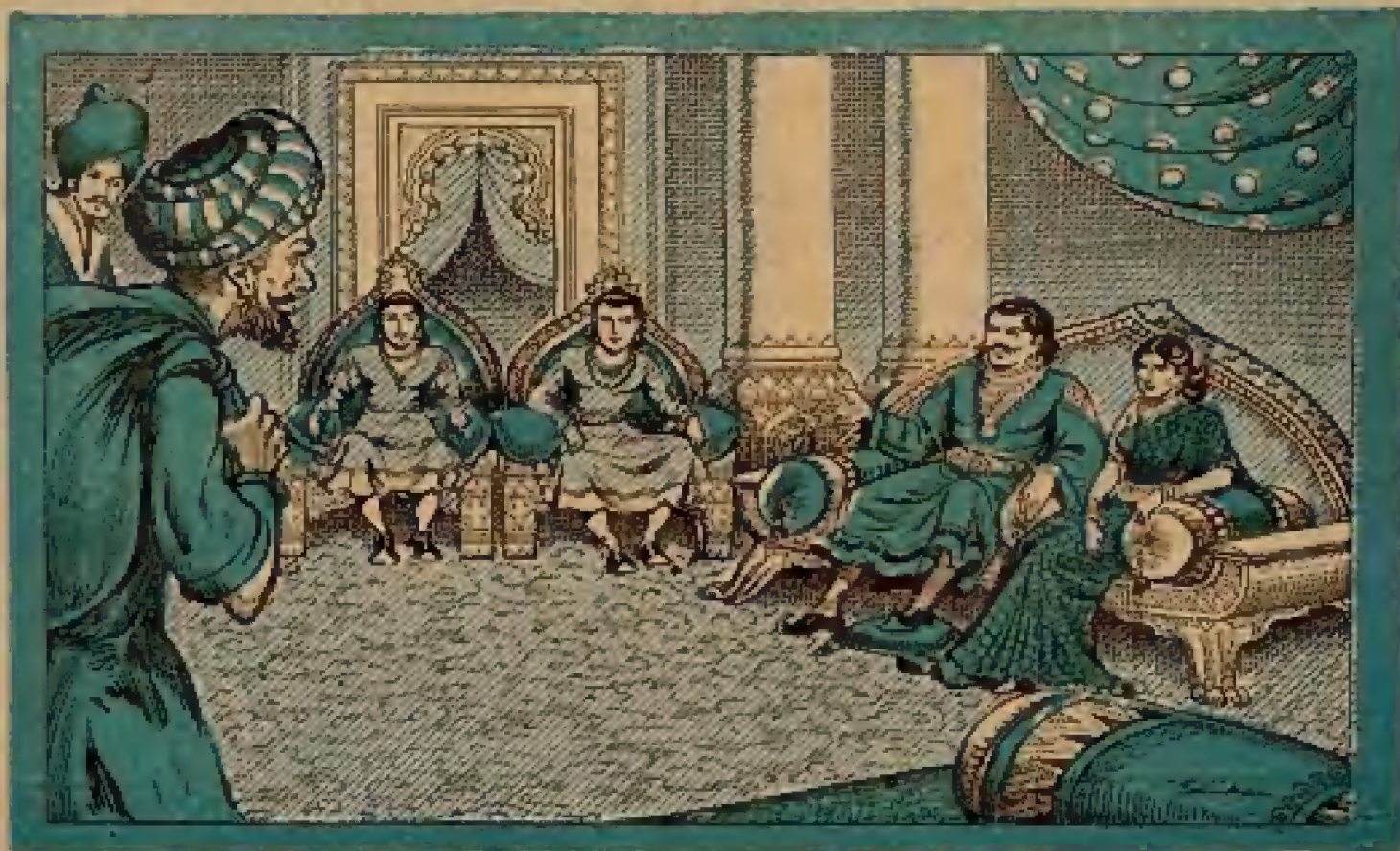
has a wife and two sons. I must take clothes for all of them and ornaments for the lady. Get them ready and I'll make the journey."

The presents were got ready. Then the villager asked his wife to prepare cakes to be presented to his friend. With all these he journeyed to Banaras. Presently he arrived at the fort, approached the right gate, and asked the porter, "I want to go to the house of the Great Horseman."

At once the porter led him to the royal palace and placed him before the King. The King was very glad. He made his family and the ministers of the court to eat the simple cakes the villager brought.

Also he wore the crude clothes brought for him and made his wife and children wear their gifts.

He in turn gave his friend very rich clothes of silk and gold and fed him with the food cooked for his family.



Having learned that his friend had come to get the tax on his village reduced, the King instructed his Ministers to abolish the tax.

Then he assembled his Court and proclaimed that the villager was to be King for half his kingdom.

The Ministers and other important persons of the Court did not approve of the great regard the King had been showing the villager since his arrival. They

thought that making him King for half the kingdom was very irregular.

However, they did not dare to tell the King so. They took the Prince aside and said to him, "The King has done you a great injustice in giving part of your kingdom to this villager. Protest to your father, for this is a matter which concerns you alone."

The Prince went to the King and protested against the gift of



half the Kingdom to the villager, on the lines suggested to him by the Ministers.

The King listened to the Prince and replied, "Son, this is not your own idea. I want you to make this protest in the Court. I will answer you there."

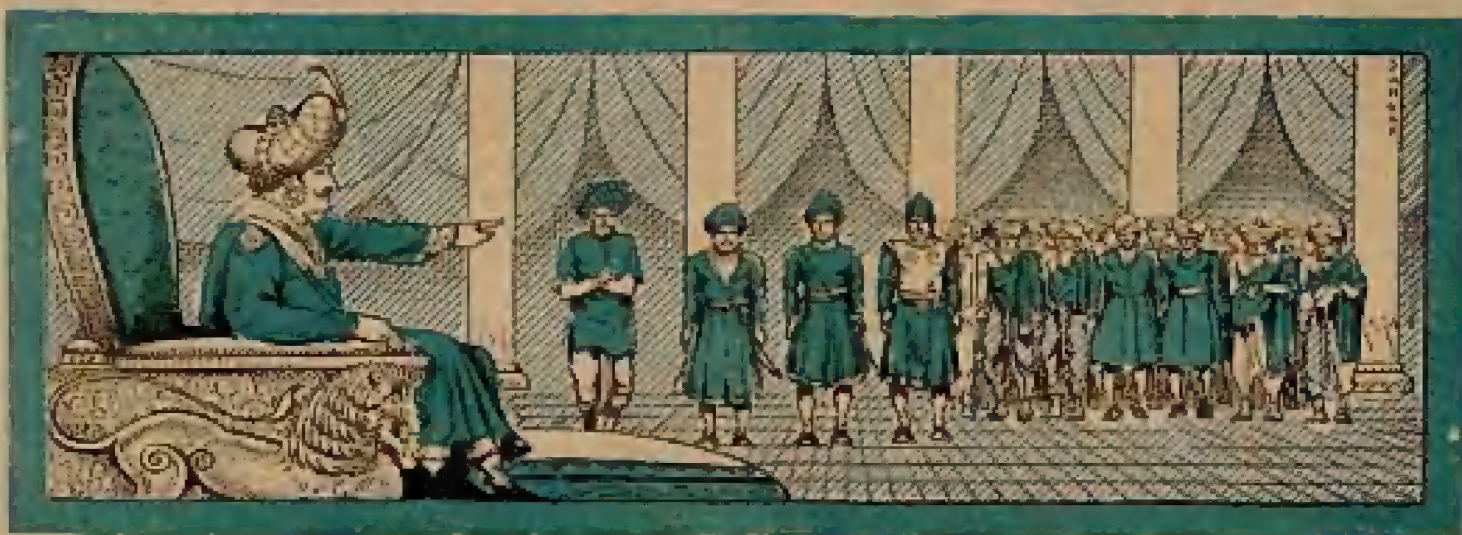
Accordingly the Prince protested in the Court against the gift of half the kingdom to the villager, and asked the King, "Why did you make such a gift?"

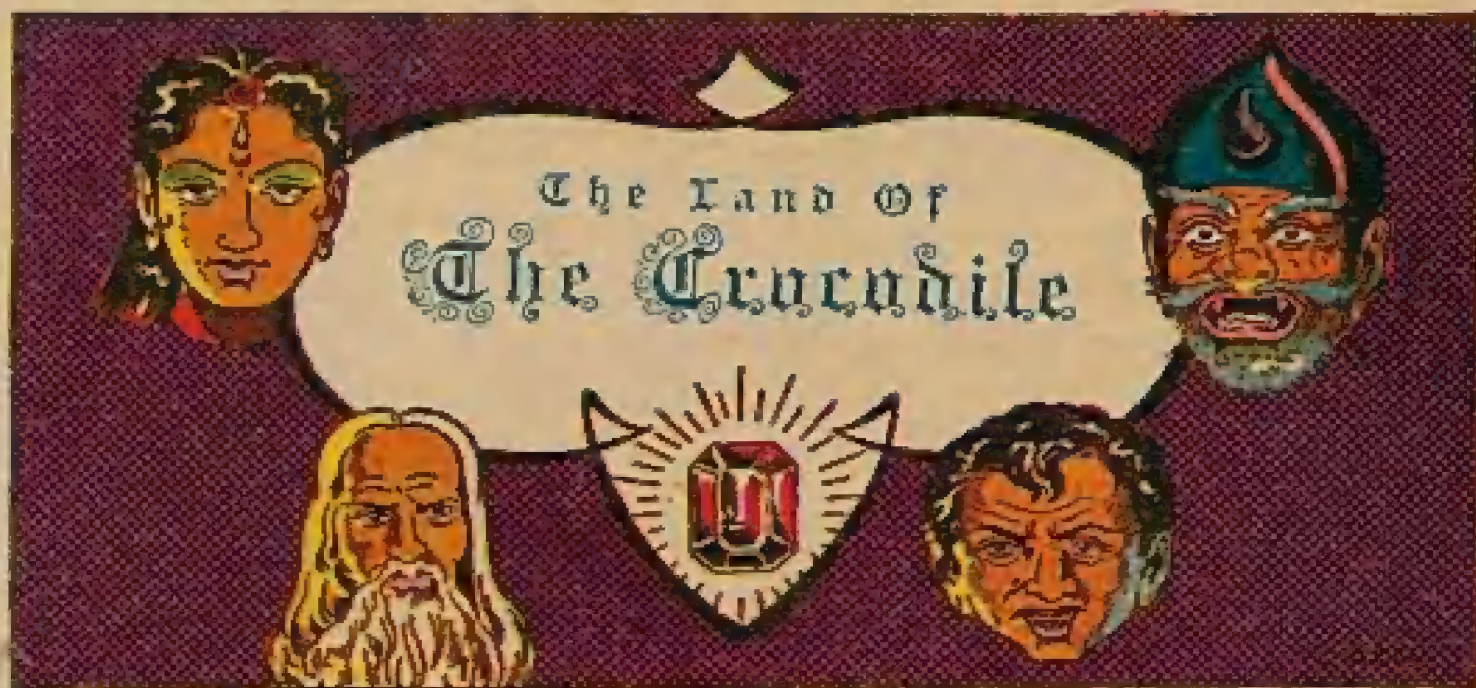
"Son," the King replied, "you did not know that this man saved me when I was in danger." Then he proceeded to narrate how the villager attended to him for four days when he was wounded in the fight that took

place while quelling the rebellion on the frontier. Then he added:

"It is as bad not to bestow gifts on the deserving as to bestow them on the undeserving. This man was loyal to me though he did not know I was King. Though I extended my invitation to him, he never came for his own sake. When he did come, it was only on behalf of his village. He is the most deserving for the gift."

Hearing these words the Ministers and others who did not approve the gift were put to shame. The Prince was quite satisfied. And the King treated the villager as a close friend all his life.





5

[Mandara-deva, who was deprived of his kingdom and was fleeing from Naravahana after his Marala Isle fell, came upon Siva-dutt of Kundalini who was in the same plight. Seated in a canoe in mid-ocean Siva-dutt told Mandara-deva how the King of Kundalini wasted his time in inhuman sports, how there was anarchy followed by a revolt of the people, and how Naravahana threatened to become the new Leader.]

THE strange tale unfolded by Siva-dutt amazed Mandara-deva afresh every minute. He was unmindful of the darkness that enveloped them and of the direction in which the boats were going.

"O Siva-dutt," he said, interrupting the narration, "could you not prevent Naravahana from taking command of the

forces? You could have taken the task upon yourself surely and no one would have objected!"

Siva-dutt smiled. "Ah, Mandara-deva," he said, "in those circumstances it was not as easy as you presume. I could not very well offer to become the Commander-in-Chief. Nor could I let the job fall upon an unworthy person. That was why

I was in a dilemma. Samarsen did notice my hesitation. He said: 'Something is on your mind. Out with it! You needn't hesitate if you have something to say.'

"'Samarsen,' I said, 'the situation calls for your leadership. I feel that you should take command. The ultimatum shows that the strength of the enemy is not to be underestimated. Even a minor defeat at the hands of these insurgents will be to our discredit and yet others will be

tempted to revolt against us. So I pray you to lead our forces yourself.'

"Samarsen considered my suggestion and finally nodded his head, saying, 'Be it so!' I thought that I had convinced him.

"At that very moment Naravahana came there. 'I was on the point of sending for you, my dear fellow,' Samarsen said to Naravahana. 'Go at once and collect an army of not less than a couple of thousand men. I give you only an hour's time. The



enemy is to be wiped out before sundown.'

"Naravahana gave me a supercilious smile as he departed. At the time I did not fully realize the deadly venom behind the smile.

"Then Samarsen addressed me and said, 'Well, Siva-dutt, you had better get together your men too. They may be needed. There will be a chance of polishing up the sabres at any rate.' He smiled.

"I picked out twenty-five of my best soldiers and got them

ready for battle. It was long since I had fought under Samarsen's command, and it made me proud and happy to know that another opportunity was again at hand.

"An hour elapsed. Samarsen and I were eagerly awaiting Naravahana to come and report that he had got together the required forces.

"Naravahana did come in time, but his appearance made me and Samarsen start violently. For Naravahana had evidently





lost his sword. His clothes were in tatters. His hair was dishevelled. There were tiny cuts on his face, and above all he appeared badly scared. 'Why, Naravahana, what on earth happened to you?' Samarsen asked him anxiously.

"Naravahana had to make a great effort to speak, and when he spoke his voice was hoarse. 'Things are beyond our control,' he said. 'It is better that we leave here and go to a safer place.'

"Well, you should have seen Samarsen react to these words. He darted up like a King Cobra that was prodded. I never saw him become so angry and ruffled. 'Am I to seek a safe place in my own kingdom?' he thundered. 'Every inch of Kundalini soil should be safe for me! You must be quite mad to talk such nonsense!'

"Naravahana shook with fright seeing Samarsen's wrath.

"Samarsen was about to speak again when an alarming clamour came from the direction of the fort gate. The sound went through the trees.

'What is that din?' Samarsen curtly demanded of Naravahana.

"O Samarsen, 'Naravahana replied,' it is part of the bad news I bring. Our soldiers have joined the common citizens, and they are all parading the streets, crying, "Down with the King!" See what they did to me when I tried to enlist soldiers for the fight. It was only by the grace of Mother Kundalini that I

escaped alive and stand before you now.'

"Poor Samarsen could not stand on his legs when he heard these words. The news was too unexpected and too shocking for him! He fondly believed that the people loved him—the man who had gone through hell on the Isle of Sorcery in order to make them rich and happy! The same people now refused to be led by him! The fact was that Samarsen did not have the least idea about recent happenings and the wily part that was played by Naravahana in bringing about recent developments.

"O Samarsen,' I said, 'despair not. Think of a way out of the present trouble.'

"Ah, Siva-dutt,' Samarsen replied, heaving a sigh, 'I am not despairing at all. It is the faithlessness of our people that makes my heart ache.'

"I did not know how to console him. I just could not find the words. I looked at Naravahana but he stood as



dumb as a post. The roar of the mad crowd near the gate was at its highest pitch. One of the guards ran to us and cried, 'Commander, they are breaking down the doors of the gate!'

"Samarsen's head was bowed down. He did not look up for a few seconds. I wondered whether he had heard what the guard had said.

"But, as I was about to speak, he lifted up his head and gave me a look which I understood at once.



"I turned to the guard and said, 'Bring the keeper of the wild animals here.' Soon the keeper of the animals was standing before us. 'Open all your cages,' I said to him, 'and let the beasts loose in the palace courtyard as well as in front of the main gate. Tell your men to be ready to put the beasts back in the cages as soon as our purpose is done.'

"The keeper of the wild animals turned pale at this order and looked towards Samarsen for confirmation.

"Samarsen jerked his head impatiently and said, 'Siva-dutt's orders are my orders. Carry them out!'

"'But Commander,' the keeper of the wild animals pleaded, 'once the savage beasts are out, they may harm the people—' I cut in brutally, 'keep your counsel to yourself and obey orders. Let the people learn what will happen to them if they break down the gate! Go at once and do what you are told.'

"The keeper of the wild animals went away. I caught Naravahana gritting his teeth and giving me a furtive, evil look.

"What was he up to? Exactly what was his share in this revolt of the people and the military? At the time I could not find answers to these questions.

"A few minutes later pandemonium was let loose. We could hear the roar of the lion and the trumpet of the elephant and other fearful noises proceeding from the courtyard of the palace.



Samarsen got up and went up to the balcony overlooking the courtyard. Standing there he could see not only the barred courtyard in front of the palace but also into the crowded street beyond the palace gate.

"I too climbed up to the balcony and stood by the side of Samarsen. I saw the savage beasts freely prowling all over the courtyard. Some of them went up to the barred gate and growled at the people beyond.

"Siva-dutt," said Samarsen to me, 'you hit upon a very fine idea.' Smiling happily, he went on, 'you can see that the people have refrained from breaking down the gate, seeing these beasts. But I am afraid it is only a stop-gap. Who do you

think was behind this revolt? I am completely baffled.' He looked back as he said the last words.

"Naravahana was standing behind us with his arms folded across his chest.

"I too do not know who the leaders of the revolt are, Samarsen. But the people are determined to remove the King,' he said.

"I never thought,' Samarsen said after a pause, 'that there was so much anarchy in the land. There is the enemy outside the fort and the enraged people outside the palace—both hostile! They want the King to go! They want power! That is about the size of the situation. Am I right, Siva-dutt?'"

(To be continued)





BEAUTY AND LIFE

WITH great perseverance Vikram once again went back to the tree, took down the corpse; threw it across his shoulder and began to walk towards the cremation-ground as before.

"O King," said the Bethal of the corpse, "I can see that you are undergoing all this trouble in order to win fame. But let me tell you happiness is much more desirable than fame. Maya the sculptor came to the same conclusion. Let me tell you his amazing story."

Then he began to narrate the following tale:

Viswa-karma was the architect of the Devas while Maya was the architect of the Demons. But Maya was by far the better

Stories of Bethal



craftsman, though undoubtedly both of them possessed great skill. But the Devas always heaped praise on their own architect Viswa-karma and never acknowledged the greatness of Maya.

Maya was not only a great craftsman, he was also a noble being. He never worried himself about the Devas not recognising his merit. "You are so dumb!" the other Demons would taunt him. "You never challenge the Devas when they say that their Viswa-karma is the

better man, though everyone knows that that fool is not worthy of standing in your shadow."

Maya would smile good-naturedly, and say, "Don't think that the Devas do not know my worth. Have I not built the flying fortress Soubhaka for Salwa on the orders of Lord Shiva? And then there was the Magic Hall I built for the Pandavas which was known to everyone."

"Viswa-karma too has his record," the Demons said. "It was he who constructed the Heavens. It was he who put the Sun on a lathe, filed him smooth, and out of the Solar chips he fashioned the Discus for Lord Vishnu. And then there was the city of Indra-Prastha which he built for the Pandavas. So let us forget the past and think of the present. We are going to hold a contest in which you must defeat Viswa-karma and make his name mud for all time!"

Maya consented to take part in the contest. Then the Demons challenged the Devas to let Viswa-karma enter into a com-

petition with Maya. The Devas held a secret conference and sought Viswa-karma's opinion.

"I am Brihaspati's brother-in-law and the Sun is my son-in-law," Viswa-karma said. "Surely I am not going to fear defeat at the hands of the demon tool-maker!"

So the Devas sent for Maya and said to him, "The competition shall take place. Let us have an idea of the greatness of what you are going to build so that our own architect also will work on the same lines."

"Each one is great in his own way," Maya replied, "and we have already exhibited our greatest powers. Now I am thinking of creating beauty, unknown yet in the Three Worlds. Let Brahma the Creator himself be the judge."

The Devas were fully satisfied. Soon Maya fashioned a life-size statue of a beautiful woman out of gold. Those of the Devas who saw it were thunderstruck with the rare beauty of the figure. Viswa-karma was taken aback.



He went to Brahma and said, "Let me tell you, grandad, this Maya is out to discredit you. He has created beauty which cannot be paralleled in all the worlds. He wants to prove that you have never created such beauty in all your days. So long as this statue lasts Maya's name will be greater than yours. I shudder to think what people will say of me in future."

Other Devas confirmed Viswa-karma's fears. "O Lord Grandad," they said to Brahma, "we depend upon you to foil this

contest somehow. We cannot afford to see it through."

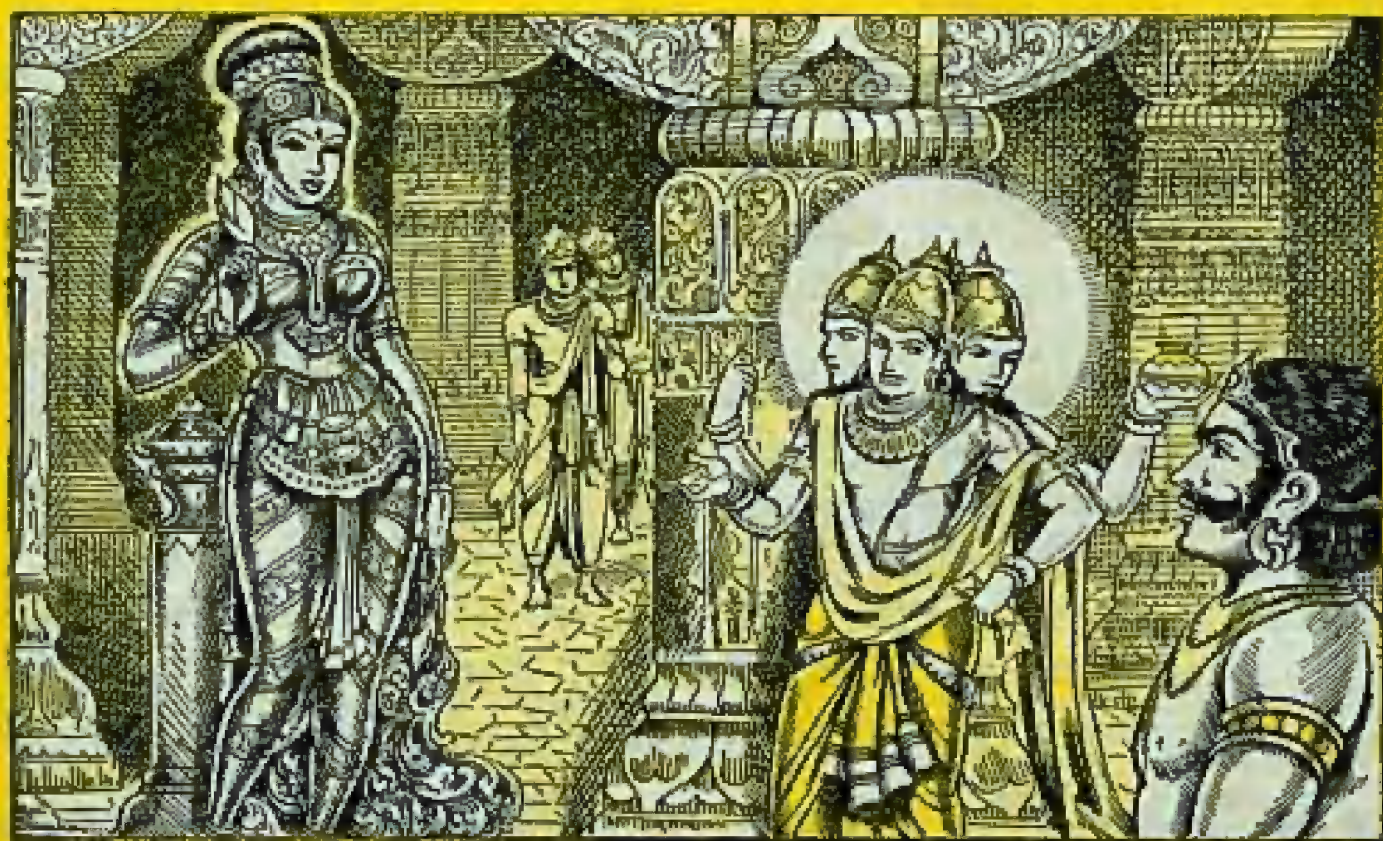
Brahma was tempted to see the beauty of the gold statue, and paid a visit to Maya. He was convinced that the others did not exaggerate the amazing beauty of Maya's creation.

"My boy," Brahma said to Maya, "I am really proud of your workmanship, considering your youth. But it makes me sad to look upon such beauty devoid of life. You see, I never created anything without life. How I wish to see your work

live! If you ask me you shouldn't waste this creation in order to establish your name as a superior sculptor. Let me give it life. You can have her for wife! What do you say?"

Maya thought for a moment and said, "O Lord, give her life. I will even acknowledge Viswakarma as a superior craftsman."

The Devas were tremendously elated. Brahma put life into the statue and named her Hema (meaning gold). The Devas married Maya and Hema and departed with Brahma.



"Now, boys," Brahma told the Devas, "you can forget about the beauty of that woman. For she is now subject to the laws of human physiology. Soon she will be a mother, she will grow old and finally death claims her. And the workmanship of Maya will join the elements."

Indeed everything happened as Brahma foretold. Hema lived with Maya and gave birth to three children, Mandodari, Mayavi and Dundubhi. Her smooth skin began to wrinkle here and there. The Demons

who praised Hema's beauty to the skies stopped talking about her.

Finally the Devas came to Maya and picked up a quarrel with him. "Hema was our girl," they said. "If she had been with us she would have been eternally young. See what happened to her because of living with you."

Then they took her away with them. After that Maya appeared to lose interest in everything. He left his native city and wandered from one country to another,



taking his three children with him. It was on these wanderings that he met the young demon King Ravana to whom he married his daughter Mandodari.

Having finished the tale, Bethal said, "O King, I have a doubt. Why did Maya the great craftsman refrain from defeating his rival Viswa-karma? What prompted him to let Brahma give his eternal work of art life and change? Was it because he had no love for fame, or because his love for a beautiful wife was stronger than his love for a name? If you know the answer and still refuse to speak, your head shall split."

"Don't you see," Vikram replied, "that Maya won the contest when Brahma agreed to give life to his work, a thing Brahma

has never done either before or since? You are wrong in presuming that a work of art is eternal. Where are the great cities built by Viswa-karma and Maya? They were gone long ago. It is beauty that is eternal. In giving life to the statue Brahma himself made Hema's beauty everlasting. Mandodari inherited the great beauty of her mother and she was acclaimed the greatest beauty in all the three worlds. Even today Hema's beauty can be seen in women all over the earth. It will live as long as the world lasts. Maya knew this when he let Brahma give life to his creation."

The King's silence was thus broken and Bethal disappeared with the corpse and returned back to the tree.



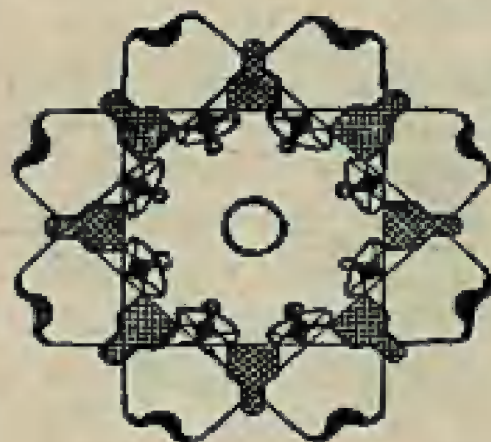
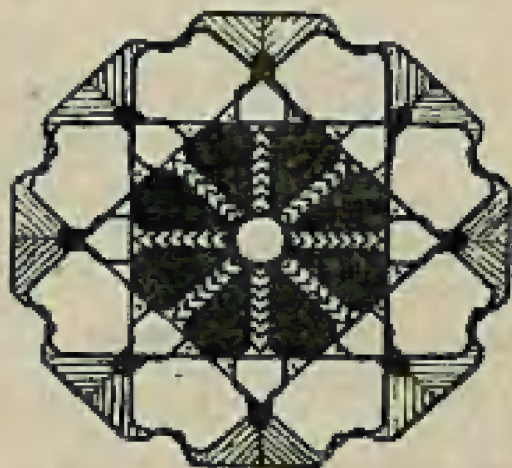
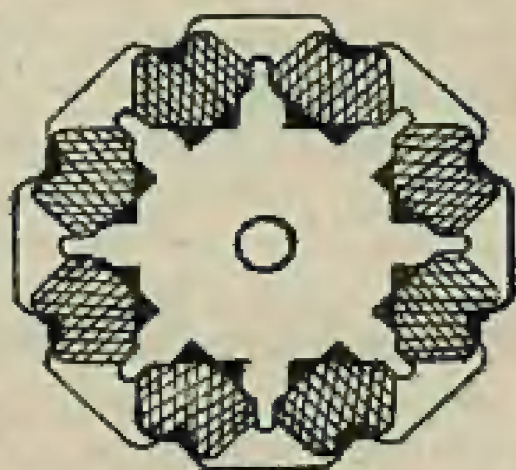


MORE DESIGNS with a Razor Blade

By

K. M. Mukunda Rao, Bolaram.

[Some designs were published
in Chandamama previously]





THE SCHOLAR

ONCE there was a Brahmin youth in Banaras, Kuchumara by name. He was a great scholar, a master of all the sixty-four sciences. Those were the days when King Bhoja of Dhara was patronising poets and pandits and giving them fabulous gifts. Thinking of obtaining favours from the great king, Kuchumara started for the city of Dhara.

On his way he stopped at a Brahman village. One of the householders of the village gave him hospitality. When they sat for their meal the host politely asked his guest, "Sir, may I know where you hail from, whither you are bound, and on what errand?"

"Banaras is my native place," Kuchumara replied. "I am on my way to Dhara, seeking

the patronage of King Bhoja." "If you are a scholar," the host said, "you need not go all the way to Dhara. Our King has a daughter named Saraswati. She insists on marrying a man of learning equal to her own. The man who can meet her tests will not only marry her but he will also become the future King of our country."

Kuchumara said that he was ready to meet the tests devised by Princess Saraswati. Purandar which was the capital of the country was not very far from the village. The host sent his own son Shambara as Kuchumara's guide.

Kuchumara went to the court of the King, announced himself as having come to submit him-

self to the test of the Princess. The officials allotted quarters for him and passed on the details concerning him to the Princess.

On receiving information concerning Kuchu-mara, the Princess wrote him the following letter:

"Sir, since you are a Brahman I do not like to see you defeated. But you need not go away disappointed. I am sending you some gifts, which I want you to accept and give me your blessings."

The servant who took this letter to Kuchu-mara brought the gifts from the Princess, too. Kuchu-mara declined the gifts and asked Shambara to draft the following reply to the Princess:

"Madam, if you had any objections to marrying me you could have said so frankly. But it was very unfair of you to try to send me off like this. The gifts are uncalled for, since I would depart without them once you had defeated me."

The Princess read this reply and felt irritated. She sent some



flowers to Kuchu-mara through her servants. Kuchu-mara understood that his knowledge of making garlands was being put to test. So he arranged the flowers in a very clever design in which his own name also figured.

Next, the Princess sent him a heap of precious stones some of which were real and others just fakes. Kuchu-mara was requested to estimate the value of the entire lot. He separated the real gems from the fakes, estimated the value of the real gems, powdered the fakes, made

the powder into a packet and sent it back to the Princess along with the real gems and his estimation of their value.

Then some maids of the Princess brought a parrot which could not speak, and said to Kuchu-mara, "The Princess requests you to teach the parrot to speak."

Making the parrots speak was one of the sciences and Kuchu-mara knew it. Within the space of twenty-four hours he taught the parrot speech and sent it back to the Princess.

Up till now the Princess had not seen Kuchu-mara. But now she desired to know how he looked. So she asked the parrot to describe the person who taught him speech. To her surprise the parrot told her that Kuchu-mara was a young and handsome man.

Soon it was known all over the royal precincts that the Princess was going to marry one Kuchu-mara who had stood her tests. But Shambara, Kuchu-mara's guide, guessed it when the parrot brought a diamond



necklace as a gift from the Princess for Kuchu-mara.

Now Shambara was seized with a wicked idea. No one knew precisely who Kuchu-mara was. The Princess had never set eyes on him. The only letter she had from Kuchu-mara was written by Shambara. There was no likelihood of the Princess putting Kuchu-mara to further tests. What could prevent Shambara announcing himself to be Kuchu-mara, marrying the Princess and getting the throne? So, that night, Shambara took

a large stone and bashed Kuchu-mara's head while he was asleep, tied the same stone round his neck and dropped him into the moat outside the fort walls.

But, early next morning, trouble came to him in the shape of the parrot which brought a message from the Princess to Kuchu-mara. The parrot flew all over the lodge. Not finding him, it approached Shambara and asked him, "Where is Kuchu-mara?"

"I am Kuchu-mara," he replied. "What do you want?"





“Don’t be funny,” said the parrot. “Tell me where he is. I bring a message to him from the Princess.”

“Come near and I’ll tell you where Kuchu-mara is,” Shambara said, and when the parrot approached him trustingly he caught it by the throat and threatened it saying, “I shall kill you if you don’t deliver to me the message of the Princess.” The parrot refused to speak and Shambara strangled it to death. Saraswati became uneasy that her parrot did not return. She

was also anxious for Kuchu-mara’s reply. Finally she sent her maids to find out what had happened. They came and told Shambara that they wanted to speak to Kuchu-mara.

“I am Kuchu-mara,” Shambara said to them boldly.

“What happened to the parrot which our Princess sent to you?” they asked.

“It was very unfortunate,” Shambara replied, “that the poor bird was caught by a big, bad cat!”

The shrewd maids returned to the Princess and said to her, “Madam, we saw a crude fellow in the lodge who said that he was Kuchu-mara. He also said that your parrot was accidentally killed by a cat.”

Since the Princess had heard from her parrot that Kuchu-mara was handsome she too became suspicious. She wrote a verse in a rare script, gave it to her maids and asked them to bring back a reply from the one who was calling himself Kuchu-mara.

Shambara could not read the verse and got very angry. "I won't give my reply to this," he shouted at the maids. "It is not fair that your mistress should trouble me eternally with her tests."

"There is no question of a test," the maids replied. "Our mistress does not want that others should know what she wrote to you. You can use a rare script for your reply if you so desire."

"I will not!" Shambara said. "I know it is a test. In case your mistress suspects that I am not Kuchu-mara but some one else, here is the necklace which she sent me."

This proved to the maids conclusively that the fellow was an impostor, since nobody had accused him of not being Kuchu-mara. The maids returned back to the Princess and reported.

The Princess agreed with her maids, but she devised yet another test. She gave her maids another wild parrot and sent it to Shambara. The maids said to him,



"You refuse to reply messages written in a secret script. Will you kindly teach this parrot how to speak, so that it will serve as a messenger between you?"

"Do you think I have nothing to do but to teach dumb parrots?" Shambara fumed. "Evidently your mistress has no intention of marrying me, and that is why she is trying to engage me in such tasks." This reply of Shambara confirmed the worst suspicions of Princess Saraswati.

In the meantime a strange thing happened.

Very near the capital there was a fishermen's village. The fishermen of this village had made a new net and asked their *purohit* to fix an auspicious time for using it. "Throw the net exactly at midnight tonight. It is the best time," the *purohit* had said.

The river was too far away. So the fishermen chose the moat. Also the fishermen had heard that fresh water had been let into the moat recently. So, to the moat came the fishermen exactly at midnight and threw the new net. It was very heavy when

they pulled it out. They were sure of a huge haul. But to their disappointment it was a human body that was hauled up in the net.

The man was not dead. The body was still warm and the heart was still beating.

In short it was Kuchu-mara. The fishermen had come to the moat only a few minutes after the wily Shambara had thrown him into it, and Kuchu-mara was thus saved from death.

Kuchu-mara was hastily conveyed to the village where his head



was dressed. His entire body was massaged and made warm. In a couple of days Kuchu-mara was fit enough to move about. But he was ashamed to tell his rescuers who he was. He remained with the fishermen, followed them to the river every day and helped them by plying the ferry across the river.

In the capital Shambara persisted in calling himself Kuchu-mara. He went to the extent of pressing the King to perform his marriage with the Princess. The Princess agreed to the marriage

but she told the King that he should see that great pandits from various countries were invited to attend the marriage. She hoped that Kuchu-mara would not fail to attend if he came to know of her marriage, wherever he might be. She also hoped that the impostor would be unmasked by the visiting pandits.

Kuchu-mara was not aware of all these developments. One morning he was plying the ferry when he saw a group of pandits arrive at the other bank. From their talk he learned that Princess



Saraswati was to be married that very day and the bridegroom was—himself! He was at first surprised at the news. Then he was tickled to see how the Princess would marry him in his absence. So, tying up the ferry, he followed the pandits to the capital.

Many a great king, poet and pandit came to attend the wedding of Princess Saraswati. Shambara was dressed like a bridegroom and seated amidst the guests. Some of the guests, who had known Kuchu-mara at Banaras, detected the fraud. They surrounded Shambara and began to test his scholarship. Shambara had not foreseen that there would be so much trouble in impersonating Kuchu-mara. Presently the fraud was ex-

posed. The King rushed to Shambara and demanded, "Who are you, fellow? What is your real name?" Shaking with terror, Shambara confessed all.

The King was very indignant. "Take this fellow and behead him!" he shouted to his men.

All the time Kuchu-mara was enjoying the fun seated in a corner. Now he came forward and pleaded with the King to spare Shambara. "O King" he said, "don't punish this fool. I know his parents, they are really nice people. I am the real Kuchu-mara. Since I excuse him there is no reason why you should punish him."

Shambara was let off. Saraswati became Kuchu-mara's wife that very day amidst great pomp and splendour.





RANGA THE FAITHFUL

ON the banks of the Godavari there were two villages belonging to two Zamindars who were not only relations but also good friends. They were in the habit of visiting each other every so often.

One day the younger Zamindar arrived at the elder's place to stay for a few days. In the evening both the friends sat in the open, enjoying the evening air and chatting, when Ranga the shepherd brought home the cattle from the pasture.

The elder Zamindar looked up and asked his shepherd, "Where is the ram, Ranga?"

"It is coming, master," Ranga said. He gave a shrill whistle at which a big, snow-white ram ran in, skipping and making a

pleasant noise with the jingling bells around his neck. He stopped near Ranga and then went up to his master, the Zamindar, who took a handful of peas out of his pocket and fed them to the ram.

After the ram was gone the Zamindar turned to his guest and said, "This ram is more precious to me than all the other cattle put together. I would not part with it for a thousand rupees. There is not an equal to him around these parts. Of course, it is Ranga that is responsible for rearing him up and looking after him. I don't think there is a more honest fellow among his class."

The guest laughed loudly at these words.



"If you ask me," he said, "there cannot be any honesty in his class. They are all cheats. They never speak the truth and they swindle us whenever they find an opportunity."

"No, no!" the elder Zamindar protested. "My Ranga is quite different. He would rather die than utter a falsehood."

"Don't say that," the younger Zamindar said. "Do you really believe that he has never lied to you?"

"He never lied to anyone for that matter," the host asserted.

"I must say," said the guest, "you are too credulous. Give me only three days and I'll prove to you that your Ranga can lie like any one else. What do you say to that now?"

"I'll say that you will not be able to do so!" the host retorted. Then they fell to arguing and finally ended up with a bet. If the younger Zamindar succeeded in proving that Ranga uttered a lie the elder Zamindar was to pay him a thousand rupees. If the younger Zamindar failed he would pay a similar amount to his host.

"I shall collect the thousand rupees from you without doubt," the guest said. "But let no one know about our bet until the three days lapse." The elder Zamindar agreed.

But, that very night, the younger Zamindar called his servant Soma and told him about the bet. "Tell me how we can win the bet without fail," he asked Soma.

Soma was in a fix. If he agreed to help his master, it

would mean that he was capable of guile. So he cautiously replied, "I am not competent to advise you about such things, master."

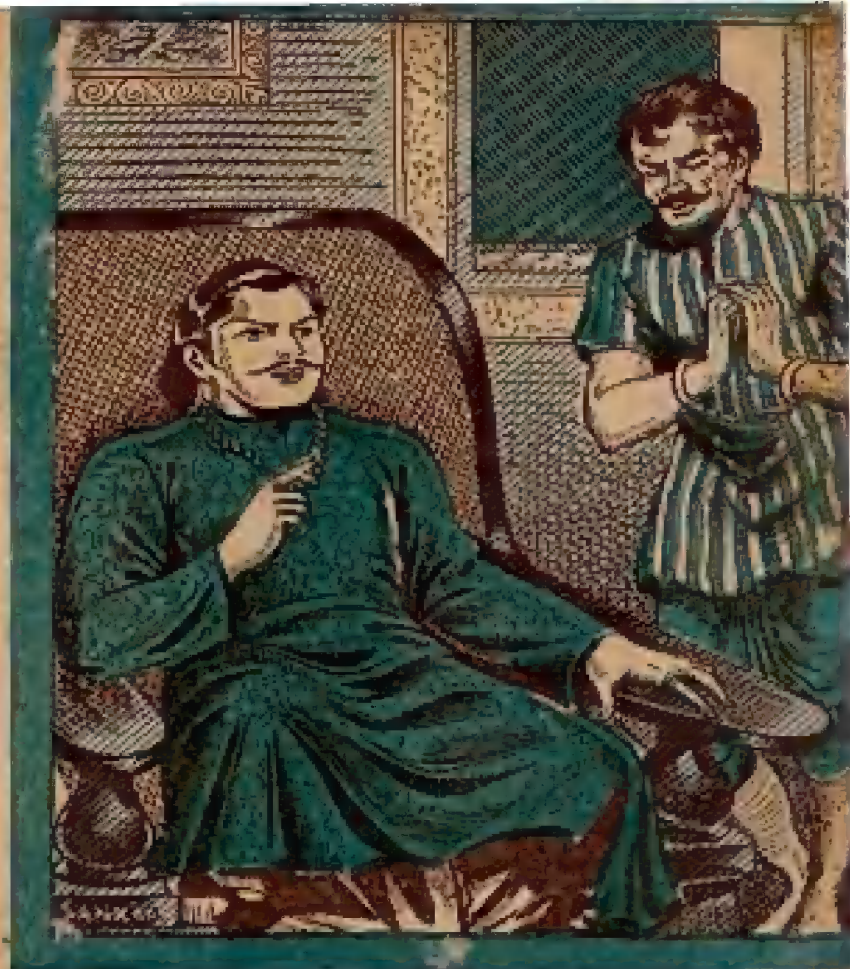
The Zamindar understood why Soma was hesitating. To put his mind at rest he said, "Look, if you can help me in this matter you shall have a hundred rupees bakshish."

"Well, master," Soma said, "I am sure this Ranga is like any other human being. He would do anything for money."

"Take two hundred rupees and try to buy the white ram from Ranga," the younger Zamindar suggested to his man, and handed him a couple of hundred rupees.

Soma spent a whole day nosing into Ranga's affairs and acquainted himself fully with them. He also devised a plan by which he was sure he could entangle the honest shepherd.

In the village there was a girl called Lakshmi whom Ranga had wanted to marry for a long time. Both of them were willing



to marry, but her father did not like the idea of his daughter marrying a pauper without even a roof over his head.

"I do not mind your marrying my daughter," the old man had told to Ranga. "But have a hut of your own first. Until you have a home and a small yard I am not going to listen to your offer."

This Ranga could not do. He would see Lakshmi frequently, chat with her and finally ask her, "How about you and I getting married?" Lakshmi would remind him of what her father had



said and Ranga would depart with a bowed head.

Soma learned about this affair. He got Lakshmi alone and had a talk with her.

"I am glad to hear," he said, "that you are going to wed Ranga. You'll make an excellent couple."

"Only, we may never marry here on earth!" Lakshmi replied. Then she explained Ranga's trouble.

Soma pretended surprise. "Ranga could obtain a home and yard with only a couple of

hundred rupees. Why does he postpone the marriage? Can't he raise that much money?"

Lakshmi replied, "He tried his best and failed."

"Why, you are no more practical than Ranga," Soma said. "Let him sell me the white ram and I will give him the two hundred rupees he needs." He took out a sack and jingled the coins.

Lakshmi's eyes grew bright when she heard the jingle of money. "But the ram belongs to the Zamindar," she said weakly. "How can Ranga sell it?"

"That is all nonsense!" Soma said. "It was Ranga who looked after the ram and it is really his. Take it as a gift from him. You can sell me the ram yourself. Here is the money in advance!"

Lakshmi easily fell into the snare set by Soma. That evening, when Ranga called upon her, she said to him, "what about our marriage? It is really up to you to arrange it, you know!"

"Up to me?" Ranga said in surprise. "I have tried my best

to obtain a house and a yard, and have failed!"

"Somebody is now offering a good price for your ram," she said. "You'll get two hundred rupees for it, and it is enough to get you a house and yard. We can get married right away," Lakshmi said enthusiastically.

"Forget it, my dear!" Ranga replied. "It is not my ram and I cannot sell it. It is far better that we should remain unmarried than that I should sell that ram."

Lakshmi looked hurt. "Well, then, don't sell it," she said. "Give it to me as a gift. I never asked you for things, don't deny me this."

Ranga registered intense pain in his face.

"Lakshmi," he said imploringly, "ask for my life and you shall have it, but not the ram. Don't think ill of me because I say so!" He turned to go.

Lakshmi called him back. She was shedding tears. "You are very unfair to me," she said. "I was so sure that you would not deny me the ram that I sold it,



taking the price in advance! Now I will be disgraced." She showed him the money which Soma had thrust upon her so cleverly.

Ranga was stupefied for a moment. Then he asked suspiciously, "Who gave you the money?"

"Soma, the neighboring Zamindar's man!" Lakshmi replied.

"You shall not be disgraced, Lakshmi," Ranga replied. "It is better to die than go back upon one's word. You shall have

the ram about noon, tomorrow. You can fulfil your bargain."

Before the evening of the following day the ram changed hands. The two Zamindars were seated in the open as usual when Ranga arrived with the flocks.

The elder Zamindar's hand went into his pocket as he said to Ranga, "Where is the ram?"

"I have sold it, master!" came the reply.

The Zamindar stared at his servant speechlessly for a time, and then exclaimed, "What is that? Why didn't you tell me? Why did you do it?"

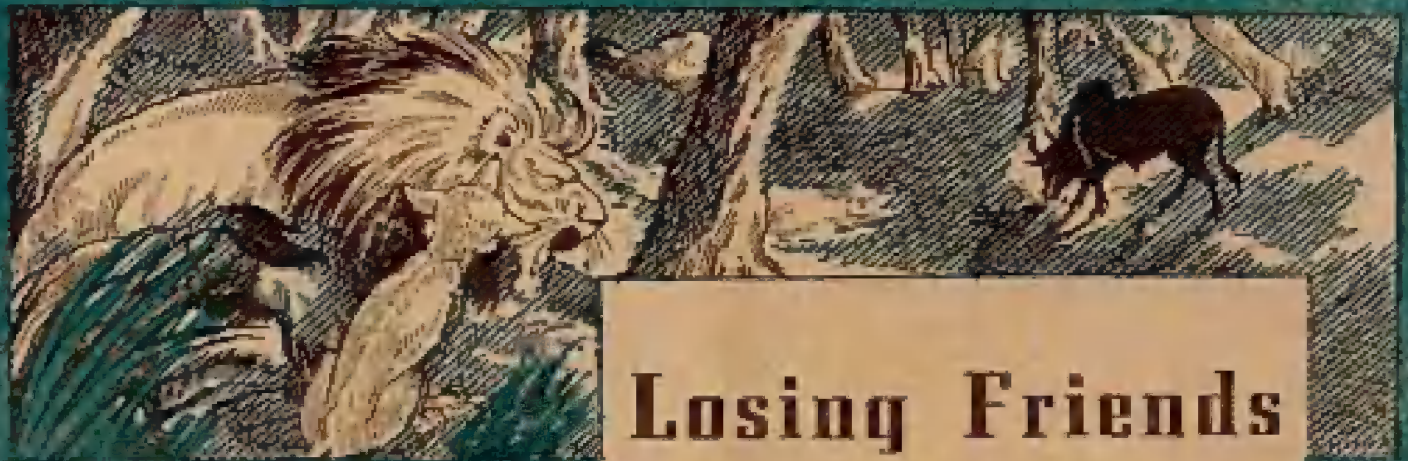
"Master," Ranga replied, "don't condemn me in haste. I was fooled by the girl Lakshmi whom I was thinking of marrying. But she had been fooled by another rogue whose name I

shall not reveal if he deigns to return the ram in a gentlemanly manner." As he said this he eyed Soma coldly, and proceeded to tell his master what all had happened.

At the end of his recital the younger Zamindar turned to his servant Soma, and said, "So this is what you have achieved, you filthy pig! Ranga did speak the truth and I have lost my bet after all. He is a really trustworthy man. Give him back the ram at once. Ranga, you can keep the price of the ram. Get a house and yard with it, marry your girl and be happy!"

The elder Zamindar too did his bit in connection with his marriage and the marriage took place at last to the satisfaction of everyone concerned.





Losing Friends

THE simple crab believed what the stork had said and spread the news all over the pool. The creatures living there got frightened and came to the stork.

"O Uncle," they said to the stork, "save us from death!"

"Very good," said the stork. "Not far from here there is a deep lagoon which never dries up. There is plenty of food there and there is no danger of famine even if it does not rain for twice twelve years. I'll transport the whole lot of you there, one by one. You can ride on my back."

The dwellers of the pool were overjoyed. They fondly snuggled up to the wily stork, who took each fish in turn, flew away to a certain rock, and ate the fish

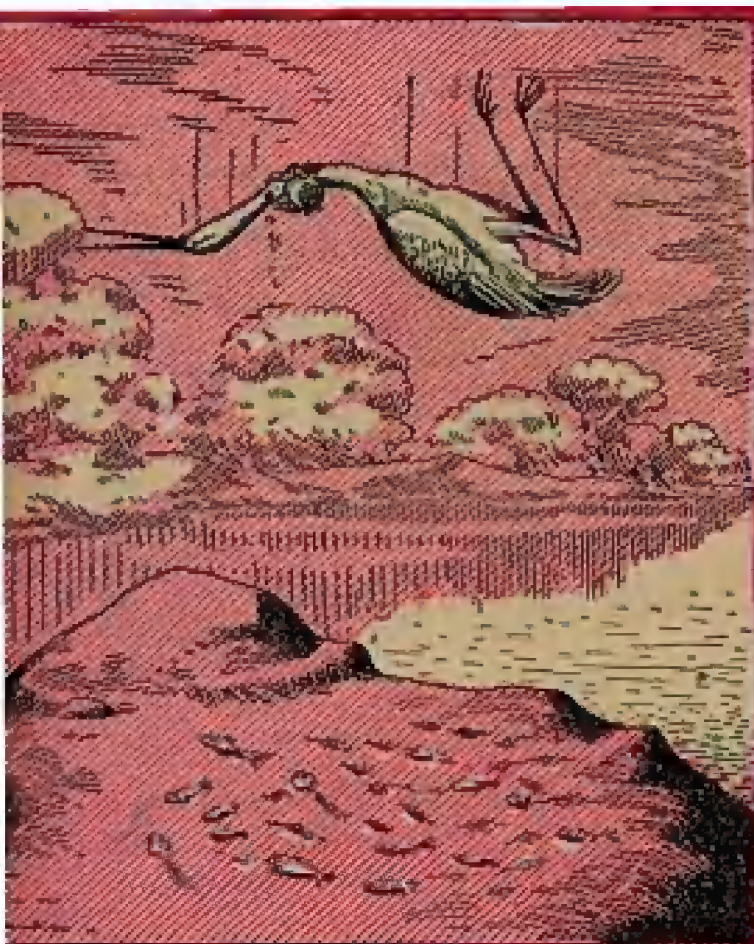
there. Then he returned to the pool for the next victim.

This went on for several days until all the fish were disposed of. Then the crab said to the stork, "Please take me, too, to the ever-full lagoon. I shall be more happy there."

The stork agreed and flew off with the crab on his back. In the distance the crab saw a rock which was thickly covered with fish bone, and became suspicious.

"O Uncle," said he to the stork, "you must be tired having flown me all the way. How far have we still to go?"

The stork laughed and said, "We are nearly there, my pretty nephew! There is no lagoon at all. I shall take you to that rock there and make a meal of you."



That was exactly what the crab wanted to know. He caught hold of the stork's neck with his claws and squeezed it until the wretched stork fell dead.

"So, friend Karataka," Damanaka said, "if we have wit we can conquer the enemy somehow. Real strength is the strength of the mind. What earthly use is the strength of a brainless giant? Have you not heard of a mighty lion which was destroyed by a common hare?"

"Really?" Karataka exclaimed. "Which was the lion that

died at the hands of a hare? Please tell me the story."

Said Damanaka :

There was once a lion which went on destroying the inmates of a forest, who were frightened that, at this rate, soon there would be no life left in the forest. They went to the lion in a deputation and said :

"Why do you kill so many creatures everyday? What you require is only your food. We will save you a lot of trouble by sending one of our numbers to you each day, and you can eat him. Thus our population will have a chance of prospering. If the people prosper, so does the monarch."

The lion agreed to this arrangement. Everyday a different animal was sent to him as food. Then, one day, it was the turn of the hare. While on his way to the lion, he had to pass by a deep well. He looked into it and saw his reflection. At once he hit upon a plan to destroy the lion. Instead of going to the lion, he tarried in the bushes till evening.

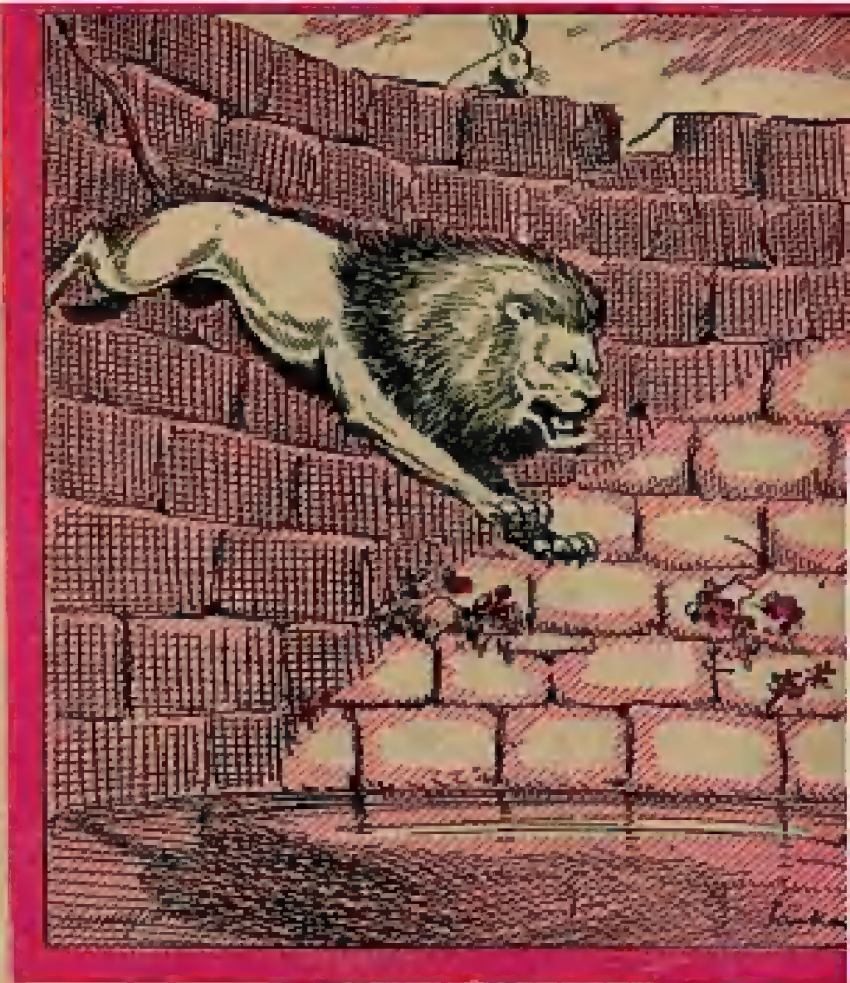
In the meantime the lion fretted and fumed. Then the hare came to him and said, "O Lord, you must pardon me for the delay. Thinking that Your Highness will not be satiated by eating me alone, I rounded up four more hares and was bringing them here, when out of the earth jumped up a lion and held us up. I told him that you were waiting for us. But he said, 'I am King here. My word is law. Who is the other you speak of? Bring him here and I shall show you who is the real master.'"

The hare played his part so well that the lion was fooled. "God, sir!" he roared, "how dare the villain defy me? I will destroy him at once!"

"But, Your Highness," the hare submitted, "he is well protected in his fortress."

"I don't care for his fort," shouted the lion. "I shall destroy him fort and all. If I don't nip him in the bud, he may destroy me later."

"It is equally important, Your Highness," said the hare, "to



know the enemy's strength before blowing our trumpet."

With such words the lion was fully provoked. Then the hare led him to the well and told him that the enemy was in it. The lion peeped in, saw his own reflection, took him for another lion, roared in anger, heard the echo and, becoming mad with rage, jumped into the well and lost his life. What was the joy of the other animals when they heard of the end of the lion!

"So, my friend," Damanaka concluded, "wit is real strength."



SINDBAD THE SAILOR

THE four voyages I had made brought me immense wealth. Despite the hardships I had undergone, I came to believe, that these voyages were lucky for me in the matter of gaining both wealth and experience. So after leading a life of ease and luxury for some time, I prepared myself for my fifth voyage.

I went to the market and bought such stuff as would fetch a great profit. With this cargo I proceeded to Basrah, where I saw a brand-new ship which was for sale. The ship pleased me so much that I settled its price and bought it. Then I selected an experienced captain and a crew of able sailors to man the ship. My slaves took my cargo aboard the ship. I brought these slaves from my home to accompany me on my voyage. Some merchants contracted to sail with me in my ship, and paid the fare.

FIFTH VOYAGE

CHITRA

This time I was sailing in my own ship. Having had good deal of experience on the seas, I thought I could give my captain good advice.

We left Basrah in high spirits. The wind was favourable and the sea quite calm. Our ship touched many a port and we had profitable trade wherever we touched shore.

Presently we reached an uninhabited isle. The anchor was lowered and the merchants went ashore in order to explore the isle. There they came upon an egg of a *rukhi*. Not knowing what it was they threw stones at it, until the shell cracked and the leg of the chick inside came out. The foolish merchants dragged the chick out, cut it up and divided it up among themselves. Then they returned to the ship.

My heart jumped when I learned what the merchants had done. "You have done a frightful thing!" I told them. "Soon the chick's parents will return and find out what has happened. Then they will seek us out and



destroy us! The only way left for us is to fly away as fast as we can." I ordered the sails to be raised and got the ship turned towards the sea.

The merchants ordered the meat of the chick to be cooked, but before they sat down to eat it the sky was darkened by two dark clouds that flew across the sun. As the clouds approached us we could make out the *rukhs*. Their cries sounded like thunder. The birds flew high over our ship and we saw two huge boulders held in their claws. Each one of

them was bigger than our ship. I knew at once how the *rukhs* had decided to avenge the murder of their chick by our merchants.

I saw one of the birds let go a boulder straight on to our ship. But our captain saved the ship very artfully, by pulling the rudder to a side. The boulder fell very close to our ship and it made such a deep hole in the water that the bottom of the ocean was visible to us for a brief moment. Our ship tossed like a bit of cork on the wave caused by the boulder.

And then the second boulder was dropped by the second bird. It fell down smashing one half of the ship to match-wood. Those of us who were not crushed to death under the rock were thrown into the sea. I tried hard to save myself and, by luck, caught hold of piece of wood which saved me from sinking. I sat astride the piece of wood and used my legs like paddles, until the wind and the waves took me to another isle.

I lay down on the sand on the beach for an hour in order



to regain my strength and calm myself. Then I got up and started on a survey of the isle.

Without any exaggeration the isle was a paradise on earth. I saw ripe fruit on trees wherever I turned. Birds of all shapes and colours were to be seen on the trees and their music was very lovely. The ground was completely covered with flowers of many colours, like a beautiful carpet of wonderful design, from which emanated a sweet fragrance. Without wasting my time in idle thoughts, I ate the fruit

of the trees, drank the crystal-clear water of a brook, lay down on the soft carpet of flowers and went to sleep.

It was getting dark by the time I woke up. Though my surroundings were extremely pleasant I was rather afraid of spending the night alone on that isle. That night I had a very restless sleep with fearful dreams. I felt better when at last dawn came. I got up and began wandering all over the place.

Presently I reached the edge of a pond which was being fed





by a waterfall. I saw a very old man sitting at the water's edge, covered with a cloth of leaves which were knitted together. "An old sailor," I said to myself, "Who got ship wrecked."

I accosted the old man. He replied only with some signs.

"O venerable man," I said, "how do you happen to be here?"

He shook his head sadly, and suggested that I should carry him on my shoulders across the water so that he could eat the fruit on the trees which stood beyond the water.

I thought that I should help the poor old fellow. I stooped and took him on my shoulders. He twisted his legs together round my neck and held my head with his hands. I carried him across the water and bent down, saying, "Carefully, now, old one!"

But the old fellow made no attempt to get off my shoulders. On the other hand, he pressed his thighs more powerfully against my neck and sat more heavily on my shoulders.

I was surprised at this behaviour of the man. But I was still more surprised when I observed that the legs of the old fellow were full of hairs, like those of a buffalo. I was seized with a vague fear. I tried to throw the fellow down but he squeezed my neck more powerfully and I could not breathe. My eyes became dim. I made one more effort to get free of him and then fell down unconscious.

When I came to my senses again the old devil was still clinging to my neck, but not so tightly as to restrict my breathing.

Seeing that I breathed more easily the old one gave me a vicious kick on my chest with his feet. With that I stood up. Then he bent forward and stretched his hand, indicating that I should walk under the fruit trees. I obeyed him and he began to select good fruit from the trees and eat them. If I stopped without his permission or walked faster than he wanted, he gave me terrible kicks. Thus he made me walk exactly as he wished. I carried him the whole of that day, like a beast of burden. Even when I lay down to sleep at night, he did not come off my shoulders. As soon as it was day again he woke me up with a kick.

I carried him one more day and night. He made me take him wherever he desired, by dint of kicking me mercilessly. I do not think that I ever went through such physical torture and humiliation in all my life. He was much more strong than any youth. Even donkeys get more consideration from their masters than I



got from this old devil. And, what was worse, it looked as though I could never get rid of him. "Why did I take pity upon this wretch?" I wondered to myself. "It would have been far better if I had died!"

Several weeks elapsed. One day, while I was carrying the old devil, I saw some gourd creepers with very large fruit on them. I noticed a large, dry gourd and picked it up. I hollowed it, filled it with the juice of grapes, closed its opening with a cork and left it in the sun.

After a few days the grape-juice fermented and became wine. When I got the chance of passing that way I picked up the gourd and drank some of the wine. I hoped that the wine would give me new strength and that the burden on my shoulders would feel less heavy. So I drank just enough to give me strength and energy, but not so much as to make me giddy. Indeed I felt so light after taking the wine that I began to skip and dance and clap my hands with pleasure.

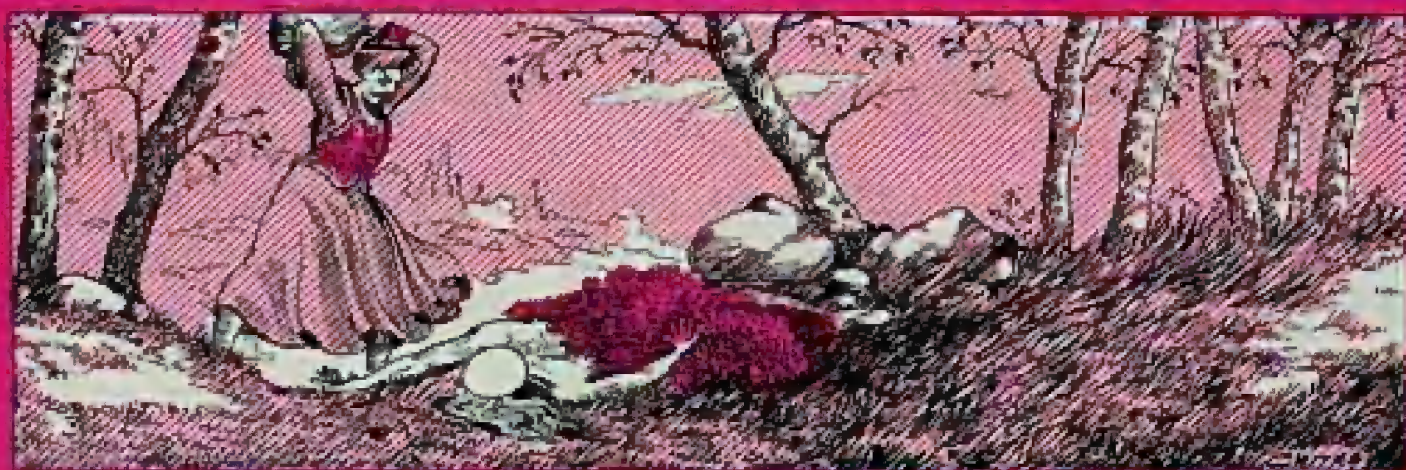
The old devil must have noticed the effect the wine had on me. He signed to me that he should have a go at the gourd. But for my fear for him I would not have obeyed him. He took the wine from me and tasted a little at first. Then he lifted the

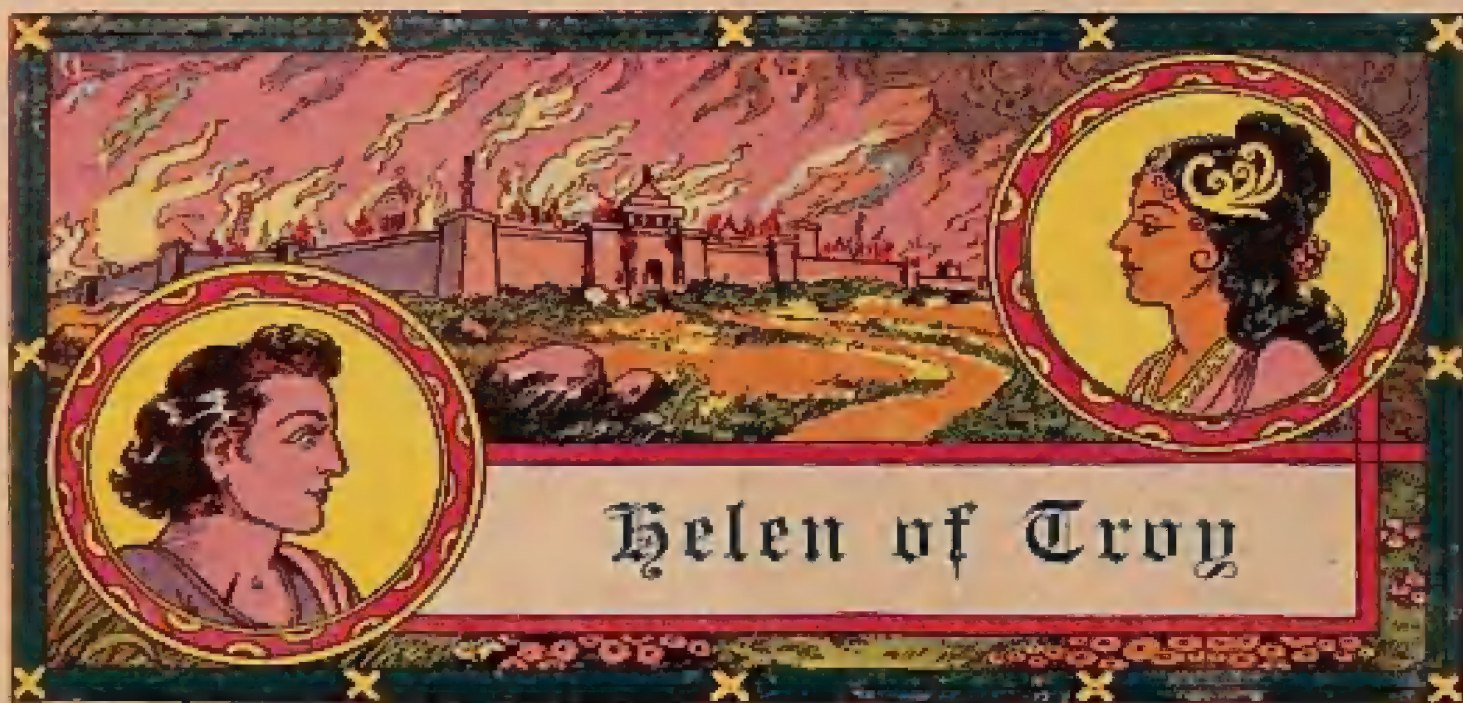
gourd and swallowed the entire lot, flinging the empty gourd far away into the trees.

Soon he was tipsy. He began to dance on my shoulders. Then he began to weaken. His muscles appeared to lose their strength. He began to tilt one way and the other, unable to sit firmly on my shoulders.

Seeing that the old fellow was no longer master of himself, I unlocked his legs from around my neck and threw him off with such force that he fell far away. He lay where he fell. He was too drunk to move. I searched for a large stone among the trees, and with it I crushed his head. The evil one died and I was at last rid of him. I do not think Allah would be merciful to him.

(To be continued)





Helen of Troy

6

(The siege of Troy by the Greeks continued for nine years though there was not much fighting during that time. During the winter of the ninth year, Achilles the Greek warrior saw Polyxena daughter of King Priam and fell desperately in love with her. He was told that he could marry her if he betrayed the Greek camp. Soon he picked up a quarrel with Agamemnon and retired from the field. The Trojans at once took the offensive and set one of the Greek ships ablaze.)

ACHILLES was mad with rage when he saw the ship of Protesilaus burning. Though he had in anger retired from the field with his forces, he now relented enough to send his Myrmidons to assist the unhappy Greeks.

In the meantime, a Greek warrior named Patroclus managed to cause a commotion among the Trojans who had gathered around the burning ship. He flung a spear amidst them and hit the King of the Paeonians. The Trojans thought that this



was the doing of Achilles of whom they were mortally afraid. Thinking that Achilles had returned to the field, the Trojans fled in confusion.

Unfortunately there was no one to rally the Trojans, since Hector had retired from the field earlier and had returned to Troy badly wounded by Ajax.

Having created panic amongst the Trojans, Patroclus put out the fire in the ship and gave chase

to the fleeing Trojans. He was wearing the armour of Achilles which he had borrowed and because of that the Trojans mistook him for Achilles.

Patroclus determined to take Troy that day and he made desperate efforts to that end. He made three attempts to climb the walls of Troy, but the Trojans thrust him back each time and foiled his attempt.

Fighting continued until night-fall and, in the oncoming darkness, Patroclus was hit from behind and fell. He lost his helmet, his spear was broken into splinters and he was in a helpless condition. He was hit again by another Trojan. Badly wounded and disarmed Patroclus was removing himself from the field as best he could, when Hector, who had returned to the field, saw him and finished him off with a single blow. Then he stripped him of the borrowed armour and took it.

At that moment Menelaus and Great Ajax arrived on the scene. They protected the body of Patroclus till it was dark and then they managed to take it to the camp, inspite of the attempts of the Trojans to snatch it away.

When Achilles heard of the death of Patroclus he wept loudly and rolled in the dust in an ecstasy of grief.

His mother Thetis came to the camp with a new suit of armour which she had got ready on the spur of the moment, in the place of the one which had been lent to Patroclus.

Achilles put on the new armour and went to make peace with Agamemnon, for he was now ready to fight and avenge Patroclus.

Achilles went into battle in such terrible wrath that no one could stand up against him. The Trojans broke force and fled towards the river Scamander. Here Achilles split them into two



bodies and butchered them mercilessly. Those of the Trojans who managed to get back to the city looked like a herd of frightened deer.

Then came the most unique fight of all, a duel between Hector and Achilles, the most valiant fighters of both the sides. They had never met, before, and everybody on both sides stopped fighting and watched the single combat anxiously.

Hector, instead of meeting Achilles, turned and began to run around the city walls. Achilles had been inactive for sometime and Hector hoped to make him exhausted and short of breath, in order to conquer him easily.

In this Hector was mistaken. Though he made Achilles run thrice around the walls, Achilles did not show the least bit of exhaustion. He was in excellent form.

Finally Hector stopped running and faced his enemy. Achilles pierced his breast with a single powerful thrust.

As Hector lay wounded and dying, he begged Achilles to sell his body to the Trojans at a price.

But Achilles did not do so. He tied Hector's body to his chariot with leather thongs and drove off towards the ships, dragging the body behind him in the dust.



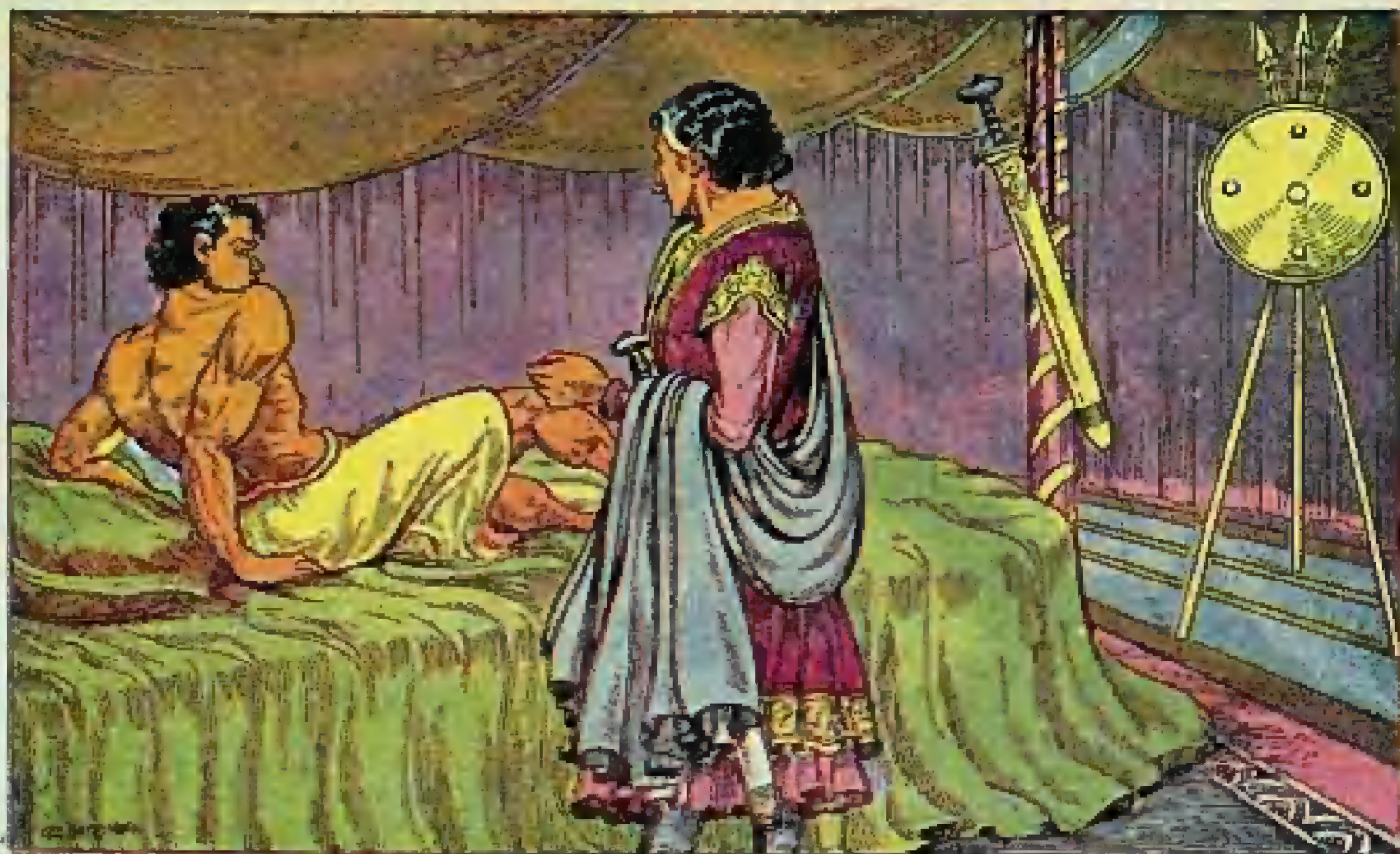
Now that he was avenged, Achilles buried Patroclus with great pomp.

Wood for the funeral pyre was brought from Mount Ida. Achilles sacrificed on the pyre not only horses and hounds of Rhesus but also twelve noble Trojan captives, some of whom were sons of King Priam. He at first thought of throwing Hector's body to the hounds but for some reason desisted from doing so.

Funeral games were held in which Diomedes won the chariot race. The wrestling contest between Ajax and Odysseus ended in a draw.

Achilles still mourned for Patroclus. Every morning, at dawn, he would drag Hector's body thrice around the tomb of Patroclus.

One night Priam himself came to the Greek camp to beg Achilles for Hector's body at a price.





When he arrived Achilles was asleep and Priam could have easily killed him if he wanted. But he showed great magnanimity and spared Achilles who had killed his son.

On waking, Achilles had a talk with Priam. He agreed to part with Hector's body in exchange for its weight in gold.

A pair of scales was set up outside the walls of the city of Troy. Hector's body was placed in one

pan and the Trojan gold was heaped in the other.

Priam's treasury was empty of all gold but some more was required to balance Hector's great weight. Seeing this, Polyxena, daughter of king Priam, took off her bracelets and added them to the gold and thus supplied the missing weight.

Achilles, who had been in love with Polyxena for a long time, seeing her do this, turned to King Priam and said, "I don't want your gold. Give me Polyxena in exchange for Hector's body. Then restore Helen to Menelaus. I'll make peace between your people and mine."

Priam made a counter proposal. "Take the gold in exchange for Hector's body. You can have Polyxena if you can persuade your people to stop the fight and depart without Helen," he said to Achilles.

"I shall do what I can," Achilles replied.

Priam took away Hector's corpse for burial. There was a terrific uproar when the Trojans mourned at the great Hector's funeral.

When Achilles undertook to bring the war to an end because of his desire to marry Polyxena, he signed his own death warrant. Priam had offered him Polyxena on condition that the siege of Troy was raised. But Polyxena, who could not forgive Achilles for the murder of her brother Troilus, did not love him. Yet she pretended to love him and learnt from him the vulnerability of his heel.

"Come to the temple of Thymbraean Apollo, barefoot and unarmed," she told Achilles. "There we shall offer sacrifices and ratify the agreement of our marriage."

Accordingly Achilles went there, barefoot and unarmed. Polyxena was there with her people.



Her brother Deiphobus embraced him in pretended friendship, while Paris, hiding behind the god's image, pierced his vulnerable heel with a poisoned arrow.

Achilles, however, gave a good account of himself before succumbing to the wound. He seized firebrands from the altar and laid about him vigorously, felling many Trojans and temple servants.

In the meantime, Odysseus, Ajax and Diomedes at the Greek camp, suspected Achilles of treachery, and followed him to the temple.

They were not aware of the pact Achilles had made with Priam in order to marry Polyxena. They only knew that Achilles had started out alone for the temple of Apollo.

As the Greek warriors entered the doorway of the temple they met Paris and Deiphobus going out. They went in and saw Achilles on the point of dying. As he died in their hands Achilles said to his comrades, "After the fall of Troy, sacrifice Polyxena at my tomb."

Ajax who was a very strong man took Achilles' body on his

shoulders, and the three of them came out of the temple. The Trojans tried their best to capture the body, but the Greeks fought and drove them off and conveyed it to their ships.

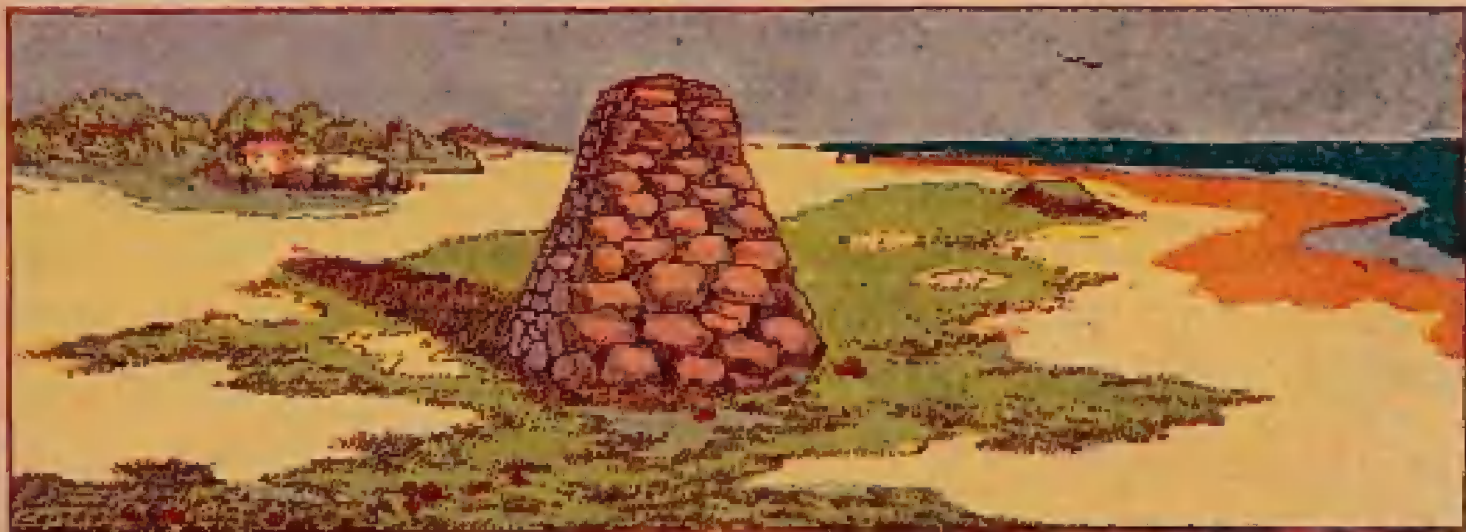
Thetis mourned the death of her son and so did the rest of the Greeks.

The mourning lasted seventeen days.

On the eighteenth day, Achilles' body was burned upon a pyre and his ashes, along with those of Patroclus, were laid in a golden urn and were buried on the headland of Sigaeum. Here they raised a lofty cairn.

The statue of Achilles, wearing woman's ear-rings, can be still seen at this spot.

(To be continued)





THE MUTE LOVER

ONCE upon a time in the city of Yodha-pur there lived a young man called Pratap who came from an ordinary family. But he was an uncommonly good swordsman and an extremely valiant fighter, so much so, that he became the King's favourite within a very short time after entering his service. It was only because of his common origin and his youth that he did not occupy a prominent place at Court.

In the city there lived a millionaire, Hiranya-gupta by name, who had a daughter called Parvati. This girl was by far the most beautiful girl in the city and Pratap fell in love with her the moment he set eyes on her.

His love kept growing day by day till he became almost like a mad man. He made one or two attempts to make her acquaintance but he did not succeed.

The King noticed that something was wrong with his young favourite, Pratap, who was steadily growing thinner and paler. Alarmed at this, the King called his own physician and said to him, "Young Pratap is evidently ill. Find out what is wrong with him and cure him. I consider his life very precious."

The physician examined Pratap and found nothing wrong with him. He prescribed some medicines which were of no avail.



Now, Pratap had a boyhood-friend named Satya-varma. He came to know that Pratap was not well, and went to see him. Pratap did not hide anything from his friend. "Medicines cannot mend the mind, as the saying goes," he said. "I cannot get well unless I can marry Parvati. And this is just beyond me. So let me pine away and die. No one can help me!"

"Is that all that is the matter with you?" Satya-varma replied. "Go to your Parvati and tell her how much you are in love with

her. She might accept your love, you know. Even supposing she rejects your love, it will still be good for you, because you will not suffer so much for her who does not want to love you!"

"What you say is impossible," Pratap replied. "She is the daughter of a millionaire and I am a common soldier. I can never get her to talk to me. Let me die in peace."

"Let me fix an engagement for you to meet the girl you love so much," Satya-varma said hopefully. "Leave it to me."

After Satya-varma's departure there was a marked change in Pratap. He was sad no more. In a matter of a few days he was his normal self again, to the amazement of the King.

Satya-varma proceeded to keep his word to Pratap by putting on the costume of a hawker. He filled a box with several attractive perfumes, trinkets and things that usually attract ladies of refinement, and went to the house of Hiranyagupta. Parvati examined his wares

and liked them very much. They were not things which she could buy locally. She selected a few of them and asked Satya-varma what they would cost her.

"Are these the only things you like, madam?" he asked her.

"Oh, I like the entire lot of them," she replied. "But I cannot waste my money whimsically."

"Surely, madam," Satya-varma retorted, "I never said a word about your paying for anything. The one who has sent you these things as gifts for you is not a merchant. He is in love with you to the point of death. Despite all his attempts he had failed to meet you and talk to you. If you can see his condition you will not fail to shed tears of pity."

"He seems to be a queer person," Parvati replied. "Why should he pine for me? If all that he wants is to talk to me let him meet me here at noon, tomorrow."



Satya-varma conveyed this to Pratap and made him enormously happy. At the appointed hour he presented himself at the millionaire's house and was shown into Parvati's room. Parvati listened to his confession of love and thought that he was a good, but an obsessed, man. In order to remove his obsession she said :

"You tell me that you love me very much. If it is true and if you want me to believe it, stop talking to anyone for a year from now on. Then I will be

willing to accept your love and marry you."

She expected that Pratap would protest against such a condition and that she would have the opportunity of rejecting his love.

Pratap, on his part, realised that Parvati was stone-hearted and that she had not the least love for him. This knowledge made him very angry. He decided to remain dumb for a year and embarrass her terribly. He indicated with gestures that he accepted her terms, and departed.

From then on he never talked to anyone. Soon everyone was talking of his new ailment. The King was more pained than anyone else. Of late he had noticed a change for the better in Pratap and felt glad. Now, he thought, the disease had come out in a different and much worse form. He issued an order to all the physicians of the realm to try to cure Pratap of his dumbness.

As one physician after another undertook to treat Pratap, administered medicines and failed



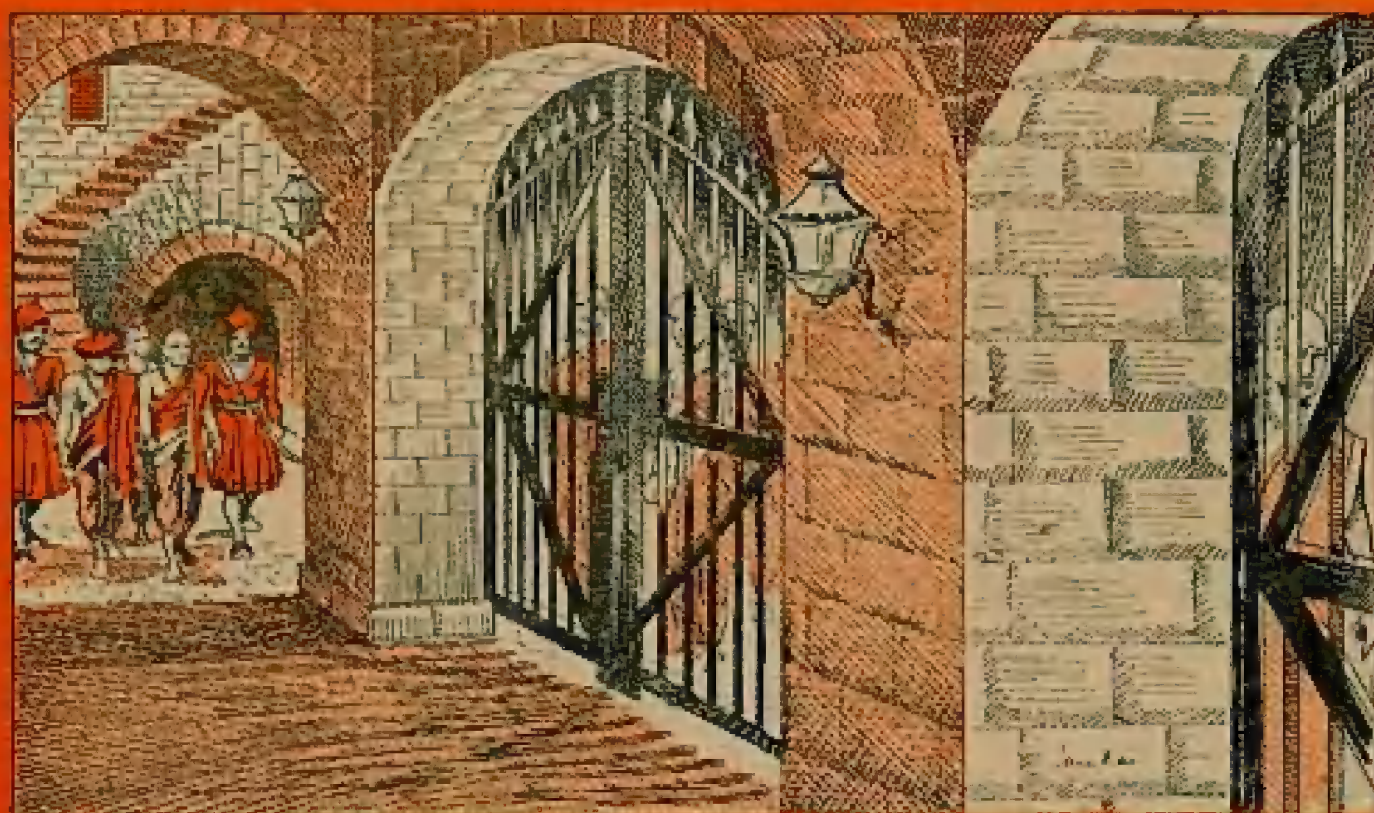
to cure him, the King became more and more alarmed.

“Pratap is young and brave,” the King said to his Ministers. “I was expecting very great things of him. I was hoping that he would be the Commander-in-Chief of my army, and a great asset for the country. I cannot understand why he cannot be cured of his dumbness. I am prepared to offer a lakh of rupees to the one that will cure Pratap.”

A proclamation was made to that effect and great physicians

began arriving from far-off places to cure Pratap and earn the money. But they had to retire utterly defeated. What was worse, even quacks were tempted to try their luck, until the King notified that those who attempted and failed to cure Pratap would be fined a lakh or sent to jail in default.

Even then some persons did come forward with the hope of curing Pratap. They ended up in jail. Six months elapsed. Parvati was aware of the strange





situation which she herself had unwittingly brought about. In the beginning she was surprised that Pratap meant to go through with the ordeal of being dumb, which she had never expected him to do.

Then she began to pity him for the torture he must have been undergoing as so many physicians attempted to cure him of a condition the true nature of which she alone knew. Finally she was alarmed when she came to know how innocent physicians were being thrown into prison

because of the King's order. The jest had gone too far!

At the same time, Parvati was awed by the anxiety shown by the King with regard to Pratap, who she had understood, was just a common soldier. It was evident that the King thought very highly of him. She felt that it was her duty to bring this affair to a peaceful conclusion.

So she went to the King and offered to treat Pratap. "If Your Highness will permit me," she said, "I shall restore speech to Pratap."

"You!" said the King in astonishment, "when eminent doctors failed utterly! What do you know of medicine any way?"

"It is true that I do not know medicine, Your Highness," Parvati replied, "but I happen to know the cause for Pratap's loss of speech. So I may succeed where others have failed. Please permit me to treat him."

"I presume," said the King, "that you know that you will have to pay a heavy fine if you fail to cure him."

“Yes, Your Highness,” Parvati, replied, “I undertake the treatment of Pratap subject to that condition.”

Having obtained the King's permission, she met Pratap. “I have done you a grievous wrong,” she confessed to him. “You have been dumb for six months now. I absolve you voluntarily. You can speak now and I'll still marry you.”

But Pratap was still angry with her. “She wants me to speak before the year is gone so that she can get out of marrying me. She also wants to collect the lakh on pretext of curing me. I shall teach her a lesson,” he thought. He indicated to her with gestures that speech was not possible for him.

Parvati begged him to speak. She even burst into tears. But Pratap would not speak. At last Parvati was forced to retire in despair and report to the King that she had failed to cure Pratap. “Your Highness,” she said, “you can punish me for my failure.”



She was locked up in prison while her father was informed about her. Her father paid the fine, got his daughter released and took her home.

Pratap felt that he was sufficiently avenged. Parvati had paid for her haughtiness and he could speak now. He never intended to remain dumb for the whole year in order to marry the girl who evidently did not care for him.

He went to the King, craved his pardon for having pretended to be dumb all the while, and

told him exactly how it came about. The king was greatly surprised when he heard the story. He sent for Parvati and said to her, "My child, I am glad to tell you that your treatment was quite successful and Pratap is now able to speak. I am sorry that you were fined. I shall see that you will get back the fine and also get the reward."

Parvati did not appear to be elated at this. "Your Highness," she said, "I did not undertake the cure for the reward. I had done Pratap a great wrong and wanted to correct it. He was once in love with me but I have lost his love. I am properly punished. For if he had any more love for me he would have spoken when I begged him to speak. Indeed, I failed to affect

a cure and do not deserve any reward."

The King was convinced that Parvati was in love with Pratap. He sent for Pratap and said, "It is not proper that you two should misunderstand each other any more. I want you to make up your differences and get married without any more delay."

Thus the King brought together both the lovers and their troubles came to an end. Soon they were married and the King bestowed upon the pair several gifts along with a dowry of the lakh which Parvati had refused.

Pratap became one of the King's important courtiers and in the course of time was promoted to the post of commander-in-Chief.



PHOTO CAPTION COMPETITION

JULY 1957

::

AWARD Rs. 10/-



★ Choose apt and significant captions for the above pair of photos. The captions should go in a pair, either words, phrases or short sentences.

★ The captions should reach us before 5th of May '57.

The pair of captions considered best will be awarded Rs. 10/-

★ Please write legibly or type the captions on a postcard and address it to: "Chandamama Photo Caption Competition," Madras-26.

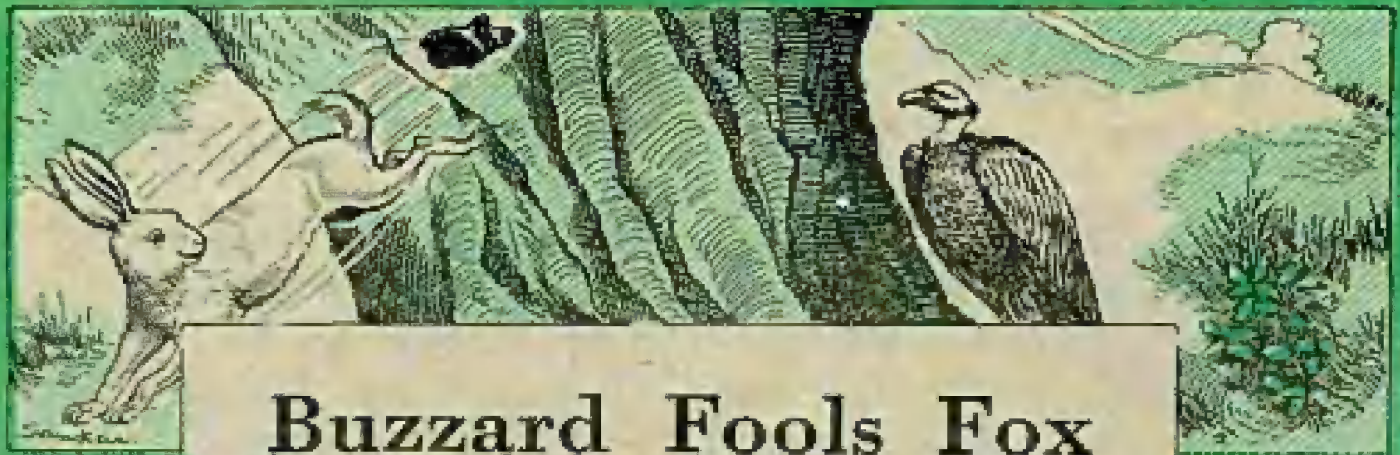
RESULTS FOR MAY

- I. *Photo*: A muscular feat
- II. *Photo*: A balancing treat

Contributed by:

V. Rajan. C/o P. P. I. Vaidyanathan, 9 Harrington Road,
Chetput, MADRAS-31.

AWARD Rs. 10



Buzzard Fools Fox

FOX chased Rabbit into the hollow trunk of a tree, knocked against the tree and fell down stunned. After a while Buzzard came there, saw Fox and exclaimed, "Is Brother Fox dead? I am so sorry."

"Ah," said Fox, sitting up, "I am not going to die without first settling my affairs with Master Rabbit."

"Master Rabbit, you say?" said Buzzard.

"Yes, he is hiding in the tree," Fox replied. "He can't escape me. Look, Brother Buzzard, will you watch the hole while I go home and fetch my axe?"

"Of course, I will," said Buzzard. "Come back soon."

Fox had been away a little while when Rabbit called from

inside the hole, "Brother Fox, Brother Fox!"

"Well," said Buzzard, trying to imitate Fox, "What is it now?"

"There is a fat squirrel in here," Rabbit replied. "How I wish Brother Buzzard was at hand!"

"Brother Buzzard *is* here," said Buzzard. "Drive the squirrel out."

Rabbit said. "If Brother Buzzard can guard the hole on the other side of the tree, I can drive the squirrel out."

So Buzzard went behind the tree while Rabbit made a din pretending to drive someone out of the hole. Then he scampered out of the hole and dashed home.

In the meantime, Buzzard searched in vain for the hole on

the other side and at last realised that Rabbit had fooled him and given him the slip.

"Let me fool Fox and enjoy the fun," Buzzard said to himself, and waited for Fox.

Presently Fox came with the axe on his shoulder. "What says Master Rabbit?" he asked of Buzzard.

"There is not a sound!" Buzzard replied. "I think he is sleeping."

"Let us wake him up then!" said Fox, and began to hack at the tree with his axe.

After a few strokes Fox was tired. As he stood leaning on his axe and panting, he noticed Buzzard laugh to himself. Suspecting mischief, he looked coldly at Buzzard and said, "Are you sure Rabbit is inside?"

"Of course, I am!" said Buzzard. "I was watching all the time."

Fox peeped down the hole and said, "I see something. Come and see if it is not his leg."

Buzzard put his head inside the hole and at once Fox caught hold of his neck. "You want to fool me, scoundrel?" he said.

"Let me go!" cried Buzzard. "I asked you to watch the hole and you let Rabbit escape," Fox said.

Fox took Buzzard by his tail and tried to dash him to the ground. But he managed to detach only a few feathers off Buzzard's tail.

"Thank you, Brother Fox, for giving me a good start!" said Buzzard as he flew away.

(To be continued)





Prof: P. C. SORCAR

THIS is a very nice pocket trick. The magician shows the audience a very



small metallic or paper cylinder. The tube is slightly longer than a match stick and open at both ends.

The magician next takes out a matchbox from his pocket, and from it withdraws one match stick. The tiny cylinder is next held vertically and the match stick inserted in it downward (Pic.1).

When the stick comes out from the bottom opening, the black end should come out first, but in fact it comes out otherwise (Pic.2).

This is why it is known as the topsyturvy match stick.

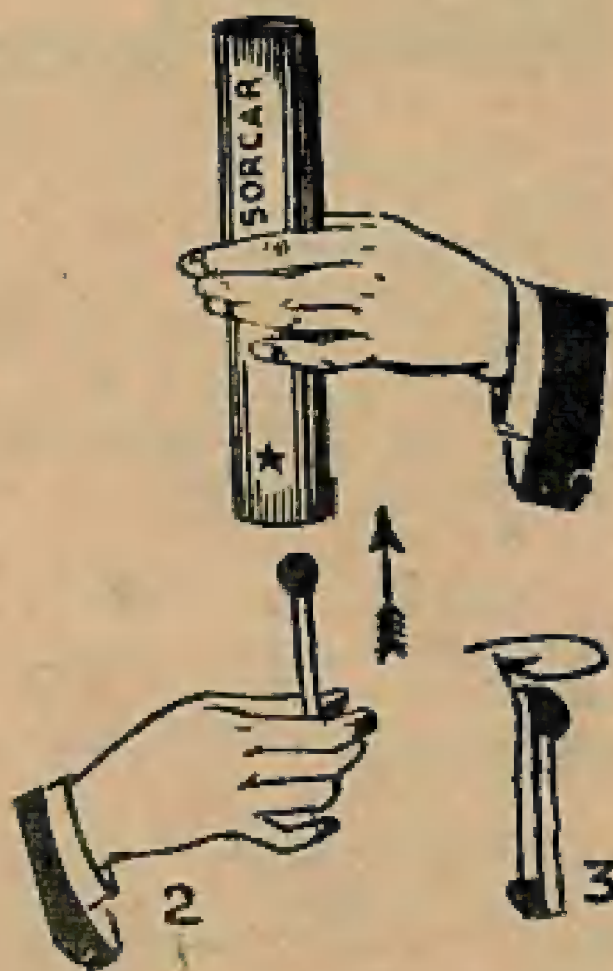
Now about the secret. The match stick is not an ordinary one. The magician previously makes a special stick with the black end on both sides. I usually make

it with ordinary gum or wax properly coloured to look like the powder of the match sticks.

The rest is easy being a matter of clever presentation and showmanship. The magician inserts this prepared stick inside his ordinary matchbox and takes this out in full view of all by holding one black end with the tip of his fingers. Next the half-open matchbox is left on the floor.

In Europe, where they usually use paper sticks, the trick is done differently. The match stick being flat, it is divided lengthwise and the two pieces are pasted together topsyturvy fashion

This method is also very clever, but the stick must be cleverly twisted when taken



out through the bottom or when it is fully inserted.





NEWS ITEMS

On March 31, President Prasad gave away the Sangeet Natak Akadami awards of the year at an impressive function held in the newly-built Vigyan Bhavan at Delhi. The recipients were Rasoolan Bai (Hindustani vocal), Musiri Subrahmanya Aiyar (Karnatic vocal), Mrs. Rukmini Devi (Bharata Natyam), Lachoo Maharaj (Kathak dance), C. G. Kolhatkar (drama acting), Jaishankar Sundari (drama production), Debaki Bose (film direction), and G. D. Madgulkar (screen-play writing).

* * *

A Soviet team of experts recommended the setting up of an optical and ophthalmic glass factory at Asansol at a cost of 2.3 crores. The factory will be capable of manufacturing 50 tons of optical glass and 250 tons of ophthalmic glass a year.

* * *

The Arend-Roland Comet described as a likly "outstanding celestial spectacle of our age," and noticed last year by two Belgian scientists after whom it was named was expected to be visible to the common man during the last week of April.



The National Indian Calendar came into effect on March 22. On that day began the 1879 Saka Era. This calendar is recommended for civil purposes.

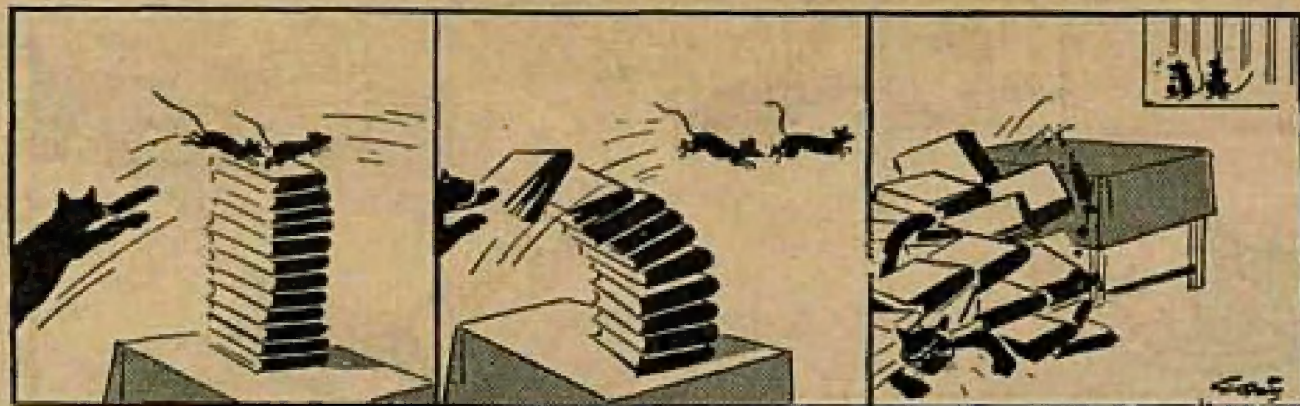
Probably the world's biggest deposits of radio active minerals have been recently located in North East India by the Indian Atomic Energy Department. These are said to contain 3 lakhs of tons of Thorium, 10 thousand tons of Uranium etc.

During the last week of March there were two prominent visitors to India, Mr. Jozef Cyrankiewicz the Polish Premier and Mr. Aneurin Bevan the British Labour leader.

Several hundred pilgrims, men, women and children, lost their lives near Bhadrachalam when two boats capsized in the Godavari, during the festival of Sri Rama Navami. At about the same time, 75 passengers died as a result of another boat disaster on the Ganges.

The world's largest nuclear accelerator has been put into operation, early in April, at the Bolshoya Volga Nuclear Physics Research Institute at Dubno near Moscow (U. S. S. R.) This machine is useful in research of the forces inside the atomic nucleus.

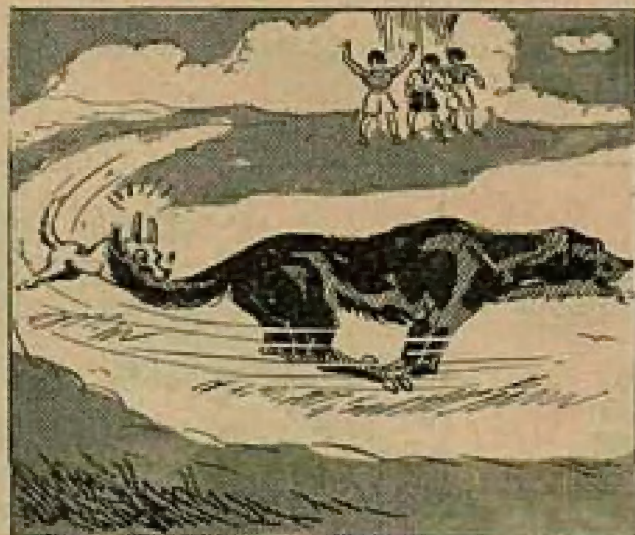
ON April 1, decimal coinage was introduced through the issue of new coins.



Picture Story



One day, Dass and Vass were taking a walk accompanied by "Tiger", when they met a boy with a very huge dog. The boy challenged Dass and Vass to race "Tiger" with his dog. The challenge was accepted. The moment the big dog started to run, "Tiger" caught hold of its tail, and, as the big dog reached the tree which was the goal, jumped over its back and won the race, to the disappointment of the new boy.





Winning
Caption

A BALANCING TREAT

Contributed by
V. Rajan, Chetput - Madras.



HELEN OF TROY